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& faythfully
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Prynted in Southwarke in S. Thomas
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The expoſition of the fyrſte, ſeconde, and thyrde canonical Epiſtles of S. Jhon wyth a Prologe before it.

by William Tindall

Printed in Southwarke by me James Nicolſon.

1538.

A BIBLIOTHECA

1315

¶ Excepte a man haue the profeſſion of his baptyme in his harte, he cã not vnderſtonde the ſcripture.

AS a mã can by no means read, excepte he be taught the letters of the croſſe rowe, euẽ ſo it is vnpoſſible for a man of what ſo euer degre or name he be to vnderſtonde ought in the ſcripture vnto the honoure of God, and health of hys ſoule, excepte he be fyrſt taught the profeſſion of his baptyme, and haue it alſo wrytten in hys harte.

The profeſſion of oure baptyme what it is.

Whych profeſſion ſtondeth in.ii.thynges: The one is the knowlege of the law of God, vnderſtandynge it ſpiritually, as Chriſt expoũdeth it Mathew in the.v.vi. and.vii.chapter: ſo that the roote and lyfe of all lawes is thys : Loue thy LORDE God with al thyne hart, all thy ſoule, and all thy myghte, and thy neghboure as thy ſelfe for his ſake: and that loue only, be the fulfyllynge of yͤ law (as Paule teacheth,) and that what ſoeuer dede we do, and not of that loue, that ſame fulfylleth no lawe in the ſyght of God.

Goſpell.

And the other is to knowe the promiſes of mercye, whyche are in oure ſaueoure Chriſt, vnderſtandynge them alſo purely wythoute all leuen, after the mercyfulleſt faſhion as ſcripture expreſſeth them, and after all fatherlye loue and kyndneſſe of God vnto al that repēt towarde the lawe and beleue in Chriſte.

And to haue this profeſſion wrytten in thyne harte, is to conſent vnto yͤ law that it is ryghteous, and good, and to loue it in thyne harte & to ſubmyt thyſelfe therevnto for to learne it, and to rule and ſquare all thy dedes therby, & thē to beleue in Chriſt that for hys ſake, all thy ſynnes whyche thou dydeſt before yͤ knowlege of this profeſſion, are forgeuē the clerly, both pena & culpa (to vſe yͤ Romyſh termes,) and that for none other ſatiſfaction to Godwarde, then Chriſtes bloude, and euen ſo, that all the ſynne which we do after this knowlege ether of chaunce, ignoraunce, infyrmyte, negligence, or prouoked and ouercomme of yͤ fleſh, is forgeuē vs lykwyſe both pena and culpa thorow repentaunce and fayth in Chriſte wythoute oure ſatiſfaction of workes to Godwarde.

Not wythſtondynge we beynge all

ſonnes of one God, ⁊ ſeruauntes of one Chriſt muſt agre amonge our ſelues, ⁊ he that hath offended, muſt mekely knowlege his fault, and offer hymſelfe to make amendes vnto the vtmoſt of hys power, and yf he haue not where wyth, and axe forgeueneſſe for Chriſtes ſake, the other is bounde to forgeue hym. Nother wyth out reconcylinge hym ſelfe vnto hys brother maye ony man be at the fyrſt receaued vnto the profeſſion of Chriſtes fayth, nor continue therin, nor be receaued in agayne yf he be for hys open offences put therout. For how can a man loue hys neghboure as well as hymſelfe, ⁊ be ſory that he hath hurt hym, excepte he ſhulde offer hymſelfe to make amendes?

And we muſte from hence forth walke in the lyfe of penaunce (yf ye wyll haue it ſo called) and after the doctrine of Chriſt euery man tame hys fleſhe wyth prayer faſtynge, and the continual meditacyons of Chriſtes Penaunce and paſſions for vs, and of the holy ſayntes: and with ſuch abſtinence, and kynde of lyuing as euery man thinketh mooſt mete for hys cõplexion, the yonger confeſſyng theyr infirmities to yͤ elder, diſcreter, ⁊ better learned and axynge theyr aduyce and wholſome counſell for the repreſſynge of theyr diſeaſes, but all to tame the fleſh, and to ſerue thy neghbour, wythout ony ſuperſticious mynde.

But to Godwarde is ther no ſatiſfaction ſaue fayth in Chriſtes bloude out of a repentynge harte. For oure outwarde dedes can not be referred vnto God to do hym ſeruice in hys owne perſone, and to helpe hym or make hym better there wyth. We can do no more with thē, wer they neuer ſo perfecte, and done wyth all loue, then ſatiſfye the lawe for the preſent tyme, and do oure duety vnto oure neghboures, and tame oure owne fleſhe, but not to make ſatiſfaction to God for ſynne that is once paſt. The ſynne that is once commytted muſt God forgeue frely of a fatherly loue for Chriſtes ſake.

When God viſiteth vs with ſycknes, pouerte, or what ſo euer aduerſite it be, he doth it not of a tyrannous mynde to ſatiſfye hys luſte in oure ſufferrynge of euell, to make ſatiſfaccion for the ſynne that is paſte, of the whiche we repent and be ſory: But of a fatherly loue, to make vs knowe oure ſelfes, and fele hys mercy, and to tame the fleſh, and to kepe vs from ſynnynge agayne. As no natural father punyſſheth hys chylde becauſe he delyteth in tormentynge of hym, to take ſatiſfaction for the ſynne that is paſte. But fyrſt teacheth kyndly and ſufferreth and forgeueth once or twyſe, and then at the laſte, when he ſeyeth the body ſo wanton that the chylde can not contynue in the ryghte waye, for the rage of wylde luſtes, he beateth hym, to ſubdue the fleſh only and to tame it, that the doctryne of the father may haue hyr due courſe in the harte of the chylde, & ſhulde not be choked wyth luſtes, and concupiſcences of oure wycked nature.

Euen ſo is it of God, yf ony of hys chyldren that haue profeſſed his law, and the faythe of oure ſaueoure, be neglygent to tame hys fleſhe, wyth prayer, faſtynge, and good dedes after the doctryne of Chriſte, he wyll ſurelye ſcourge hym to brynge hym in to the ryghte waye agayne, and to kepe hym that the doctryne of hys ſoules health peryſhe not in hym. But he taketh not hys mercye from vs, nor thynketh on the ſynne ẏ is paſte, after that we repente and be full conuerted, but abſolueth vs both a pena and culpa for Chriſtes ſake, and is as myghtye and as mercyfull to do it for Chriſtes ſake, as the B. of Rome for mony, beſides that he hath promyſed mercyfully ſo to do.

¶ The knowlege of our baptyme is the keye and the lyght of the ſcripture.

AND agayne as he whyche knoweth hys letters well, and can ſpell perfectly, can not but reade (yf he be diligēt:) and as he which hath cleare eyes wythout impediment or let, and walketh therto in the lyght and open daye can not but ſe, yf he attende and take hede: euen ſo who ſo euer hath the profeſſion of baptyme wrytten in hys harte, can not but vnderſtonde the ſcripture, yf he exerciſe hymſelfe therin, and compare one place to another, and marke the maner of ſpeche, & aſke here and there the meanynge of a ſentence of them that be better exercyſed than he is.

The keye & lyght of the ſcripture.

For as the doctrine whiche we ſhulde be taught before we were baptyſed, and for lacke of age is deferred vnto the yeares of diſcrecyon is the keye, that byndeth & lowſeth, locketh and vnlocketh the conſcience of all ſynners: euen ſo that leſſon, where it is vnderſtande, is onely yͤ keye that openeth all the ſcripture, and euen yͤ whole ſcripture in it ſelfe gathered together in a narowe compaſſe and brought in to a compendiouſneſſe, and tyll thou be taught that leſſon, that thou hart fele the ſwetneſſe of it, the ſcripture is locked and ſhut vp from the, and ſo darke, that thou couldeſt not vnderſtande it, though Peter, Paul or Chriſt hymſelfe dyd expounde it vnto the, nomore than a blynd man can ſe, though thou ſet a candell before hym, or ſheweſt hym the Sonne, or poynteſt with thy fynger vnto that thou woldeſt haue hym to loke vpon.

Now be we all baptyſed: But alas not one from the hyeſt vnto the loweſt euer taught the profeſſion or meanynge therof. And therfore we remayne all blynde generally, as well our great Rabynes for all theyr hygh learnyng, which they ſeme to haue, as the lay people: yee and ſo muche the more blynde are our great clerkes, that where the laye people for a great nombre of them are taughte

How yͤ ſcripture is locked vp from our vnderſtandynge.

nothynge at all, they be al wronge taught and the doctrine of theyr baptyme is all corrupte vnto them, wyth the leuē of falſe gloſes, yer they come to reade the ſcripture. So that the lyght whych they brynge wyth them to vnderſtande the ſcripture wyth all, is vtter darkeneſſe and as contrary vnto the ſcripture, as the Deuel vnto Chriſt.

By reaſon wherof the ſcripture is locked vp, and become ſo darcke vnto them, yͭ they grope for the dore, and can fynde no waye in, and is become a maſe vnto thē, in the whych they wandre as in a myſte, or (as we ſaye) led of Robbyn goodfellow that they can not come to the ryght way no though they turne theyr cappes: and yͤ blyndnes therof hath blynded theyr eyes wyth malyce, ſo that thoughe they beleue not the ſcripture to be falſe, yet they perſecute the ryghte vnderſtandynge therof, and can not beleue it true in the playne ſence, whych it ſpeaketh to them in. It is become a turneagayne lane vnto them, whych they can not go thorow, nor make thre lynes agre together. And fynally the ſentences of the ſcripture are nothynge but very rydels vnto them, at the whych they caſte as the blynde man doth at the crowe, and expounde by geſſe, an hũdreth doctours an hundreth wayes, and one man in .xx. ſermons allegynge one texte after .xx. faſhions, hauynge no ſure doctrine to cleue vnto, and all for lacke of the ryght knowlege of the profeſſion of oure baptyme.

¶ He that hath the profeſſion of baptyme wrytten in hys harte can be no heretyke.

ANother concluſion is thys: As he whych euer crepeth alonge by the grounde and neuer clymmeth, can not fall from an hygh: Euen ſo no man ỹ hath the profeſſion of his baptyme wrytten in hys harte can ſtomble in the ſcripture, and fall vnto hereſyes, or become a maker of diuiſion and ſectes, and a defender of wyld and vayne opinions. For the whole and only cauſe of hereſyes and ſectes is Pryde. Now the lawe of God truly interpreted robbeth al them, in whoſe hartes it is wrytten, and maketh them as bare as Job of all thynges, where of a mã can or maye be moued to pryde. And on the other ſyde they haue vtterlye forſaken themſelues wyth all theyr hygh learnynge and wyſedome, and are become the ſeruaūtes of Chriſte onely, whych hath boughte them wyth hys bloude, and haue promyſed in theyr hartes vnfaynedlye to follow hym, and to take hym onely for the auctor of theyr religion, and hys doctrine onely for theyr wyſedome and learnynge, and to mayntayne it in worde and dede, and to kepe it pure, and to buylde no ſtraunge doctrine there vpon, and neuer to be hygheſt, but fellowe wyth theyr brethren, and in that fellowſhippe to waxe euer lower and lower, and euery daye more ſeruaunt than another, vnto hys weaker brethren, after the enſample and ymage of Chriſte, and after hys cōmaundement and ordinaūce, and not in fayned wordes of the Byſhop of Rome.

The ſcripture maketh no heretykes.

Thys be ſayde bycauſe of them that ſaye that the ſcripture maketh men heretykes, and corruppeth wyth falſe opinions contrarye to the profeſſion of theyr baptyme, and the lyght where wyth they ſhuld expounde the ſcripture is turned into darkeneſſe in theyr hartes, and the dore of the ſcripture locked, and the welles ſtopped vp yer they come at it.

And therfore becauſe theyr darkneſſe can not comprehēde the lyght of ſcripture, as it is wrytten Johan.i. The lyghte ſhyned in darkneſſe, but the darkneſſe coulde not comprehende it, they turne it into blynde rydles, and reade it wythout vnderſtandynge, as laye men do our Lady mattens, or as it were Marlynes propheceyes, hauynge euer theyr myndes vppon theyr hereſyes. And whan they come to a place that ſoūdeth lyke, there they reſt & wrynge out wonderfull expoſicions to ſtablyſhe theyr hereſyes wythall. Is it not a great blyndneſſe to ſaye in the begynnynge of all together, that the whole ſcripture is falſe in the lytterall ſence, and kylleth the ſoule? Whyche peſtilente hereſye to proue they abuſe the texte of Paule, ſayenge: The letter kylleth, becauſe that texte was become a rydle vnto them, and they vnderſtode it not. Whan Paule by thys worde lettre vnderſtode the lawe geuen by Moſes to condempne all conſciences and to robbe them of all ryghteouſneſſe, to compell them vnto ẏ promyſes of mercy that are in Chriſt.

Hereſye ſpryngeth not of the ſcripture

no more than darkeneſſe of the Sonne, but it is a darke cloude that ſpryngeth out of the blynde hartes of ypocrites, and couereth the face of yͤ ſcripture, and blyndeth theyr eyes, that they can not behold the bryght beames of the ſcripture.

The whole ſumme than of altogether is thys: Yf oure hartes were taught the appointmēt made betwene God & vs in Chriſtes bloude, whan we were baptiſed, we had the key to open the ſcripture, and lyght to ſe and perceaue yͤ true meanynge of it, and the ſcripture ſhulde be eaſy to vnderſtande. And becauſe we be not taught that profeſſion, it is the cauſe why the ſcripture is ſo darke, and ſo farre paſſynge oure capacite. And the cauſe why oure expoſitions are hereſyes, is becauſe we be wronge taught, and corrupt wyth falſe opinions before hande, & made heretykes yer we come at the ſcripture, and haue corrupte it, and it not vs: as the tayſte of the ſycke maketh wholſome and well ſeaſoned meate bytter, weeryſh and vnſauery. Neuertheleſſe yet the ſcripture abydeth pure in herſelfe and bryght, ſo that he whych is ſounde in the faythe, ſhal atonce perceaue that the iudgement of the heretykes is corrupte in theyr expoſytions, as an whole man doth fele at once euen with ſmellynge to the meate that the tayſte of the ſycke is infected. And with the ſcripture ſhal they euer improue hereſyes and falſe expoſytions, for the ſcripture purgeth herſelfe, euen as yͤ water once in the yeare caſteth al fylthyneſſe vnto the ſydes of it. Whiche to be true, ye ſe by the authorite of Paule .ii. Timothe the .iii. Chapter, ſayenge: All the ſcripture was geuen of God by inſpiracyon, and is good to teache with all, to improue: and ſo forth. And by the enſample of Chriſt and the Apoſtles, howe they confounded the Jewes with the ſame ſcripture which they had corrupt, & vnderſtode them amiſſe after theyr owne darkneſſe: and as ye ſe by the enſample of vs now alſo, how we haue manifeſtly improued the ypocrites in an hundreth textes, whiche they had corrupte to proue theyr falſe opinions, brought in beſydes yͤ ſcripture, and haue dryuen them of. And they be fledde and openly confeſſe vnto theyr ſhame, that they haue no ſcripture, and ſynge another ſonge, and ſay they receaued them by the mouth of the Apoſtles.

Unto the which ſtoppyng of theyrs I anſwer here groſly, ſeynge they are anſwered befor: That as he were a foole which wolde truſt hym to tell his mony in hys abſẽce, that hath pycked hys purſe before his face: euen ſo ſyth ye haue corrupt the open ſcripture before our eyes, and are take wᵗ ẏ maner, that ye can not denye: we were mad to beleue that it, whych hath lyen .xv.c. yeare as you ſaye in your rottẽ mawes, ſhulde nowe be wholſome for vs, ye haue chewed and mingled it wyth your poyſon ſpatle. Can ye beare vs in hande and perſuade vs thynke ye wyth youre ſophiſtrye to beleue that ye ſhulde miniſtre your ſecrete tradicions wythout grounde truely, whan we ſe you miniſtre the open ſcripture falſly? Can ye bewytch our wyttes wyth youre poetry, to beleue, that ye ſhulde miniſtre youre ſecrete tradicions for oure profyte, whan we ſe you corruppe the open ſcripture to the loſſe of our ſoules for your profyte? Nay it is an hũdreth tymes more lykely that ye ſhulde be falſer in ſecrete thynges than in open. And therfore in the very ſacramentes whyche the ſcripture teſtifyeth, that Chryſte hymſelfe ordened them, we muſte haue an eye vnto your hande, how ye mynistre them. And as we reſtoꝛe the ſcripture vnto hyꝛ ryght vnderſtondynge from youre falſe gloſes: euen ſo delyuer we yͤ ſacramentes and ceremonyes vnto theyꝛ ryght vſe frō youre abuſe. And that muſt we do wyth the ſcripture, which can coꝛrupte no man that commeth thereto wyth a meke ſpꝛete, ſekynge there only to faſhion hymſelfe lyke Chꝛiſt, accoꝛdynge to the pꝛofeſſion and vowe of our baptyme. But contrary wyſe, he ſhall there fynde the myghtye power of God, to altre hym, and chaũge hym in the inner man a lytle and lytle in pꝛoceſſe, vntyll he be full ſhapen after the ymage of our ſaueour, in knowledge and loue of all truth and power to woꝛke there after.

Finally then foꝛ as muche as the ſcripture is the lyght and lyfe of Gods electe, and that myghty power, wher with God createth them and ſhapeth them, after yͤ ſymilitude, lykeneſſe and very faſhion of Chꝛiſt, and therfoꝛe ſuſtenaunce, comfoꝛte, and ſtrength to coꝛage them, that they maye ſtonde faſt, and endure and merylye beare theyꝛ ſoules health, where wyth the luſtes of the fleſhe are ſubdued, and kylled, and the ſprete mollifyed and made ſofte, to receaue the print of the ymage of oure ſaueoure Jeſu. And for as muche as the ſcripture is ſo pure of it ſelf that it can corrupte no man, but the wycked only, whiche are infect beforehande, and yer they come at it, corruppe it wyth the hereſyes that they brynge with them. And for as much as the complaynt of the hypocrytes that the ſcriptur maketh heretykes is vayne and fayned, and ẏ reaſons where wyth they wold proue that the lay people ought not to reade the ſcripture is falſe, wycked, and the frute of rottẽ trees: therfore are they faythfull ſeruauntes of Chriſt and faythful miniſtres and diſpenſers of hys doctrine, and true harted toward theyr bretheren, which haue geuen themſelues vp in to the hand of God, and put them ſelues in ieoperdy of all perſecution, theyr very lyfe deſpyſed, and haue tranſlated the ſcripture purely and wyth good conſcience, ſubmyttyng themſelues and deſyrynge them that can, to amende theyr tranſlation, or (yf it pleaſe them) to tranſlate it themſelues, after theyr beſte maner, yee and let them ſowe to theyr gloſes, as many as they thynke they can make cleue therto, & then put other mens translation out of the waye.

Howe be it thoughe God hathe so wrought with them, that a greate part is translated, yet as it is not ynough that the father and the mother haue bothe begotten the chylde, and brought it into thys worlde, except they care for it, and brynge it vp tyll it can helpe it ſelfe: Euē ſo it is not ynoughe to haue tranſlated, though it were the whole ſcripture in to the vulgare and commune tunge, excepte we alſo brought agayne the lyght to vnderſtonde it by, and expell that darke cloude, whiche the hypocrites haue ſpred ouer the face of the ſcripture, to blynd the ryght ſence and true meanynge therof. And therfor are ther diuerſe introductiōs ordeyned for you, to teache you the profeſſion of your baptyme, the only lyght of the ſcripture: one vpō the epiſtle of Paul to the Romaynes, and another called: The pathway into ẏ ſcripture. And for ẏ ſame cauſe, haue I taken in hāde to enterpret thys epiſtle of ſaynt Jhon ẏ Euangeliſte, to edifye the laye man, & to teache hym how to read the ſcripture, & what to ſeke therin, & that he may haue to anſwer the hypocrites, and to ſtoppe theyr mouthes wythall.

And fyrſte vnderſtande that all the epiſtles that the Apoſtles wrote, are the Goſpell of Chriſte, though all that is the Goſpell be not an Epiſtle. It is called a Goſpell, that is to ſaye glad tydynges, becauſe it is an open preachynge of Chriſte: and an Epiſtle, becauſe it is ſent
as a letter or a byll to them
that are abſent.

¶Here beginneth the fyrſt Epiſtle of Saynte Jhon.

The .i. Chapter.

THat vvhiche vvas from the begynnyng declare vve vnto you, vvhiche vve haue ſene vvith oure eyes, vvhich vve loked vpon, and oure handes haue handled of the vvord of lyfe. For the lyfe appeared, and vve haue ſene, and beare vvitneſſe, & ſhevv vnto you that euerlaſtynge lyfe, vvhiche vvas vvith the father & appeared vnto vs.

In that ſaynt Jhon ſayeth. ¶The thynge whych was from the begynnynge, and the euerlaſtyng lyfe that was with the father, he wytneſſeth that Chriſt is very God, as he dothe in the begynnynge of hys goſpell, ſayenge: ¶The worde or the thynge was at the begynnynge, and the thynge was with God, and that thynge was God, and all thynges were made by it.

And when he ſayeth: Which we herd, & ſawe wyth oure eyes, and our handes han dled hym, he teſtifyeth that Chriſt is very man alſo, as he doth in the begynnynge of hys Goſpell, ſayenge: The worde of that thynge was made fleſhe, that is, became man. And thus we haue in playne & open wordes a manifeſt article of oure fayth, ẏ our ſaueour Chriſt is very god & very mā.

Whiche article who ſo euer not only beleueth, but alſo beleueth in it, theſame is the ſonne of God, and hath euerlaſtynge lyfe in hym, and ſhall neuer come into cōdemnacion, as it is wrytten Jhon the.i. He gaue them power to be the ſonnes of God, in that they beleued is hys name. And Jhō.iii. he that beleueth in the ſonne, hath euerlaſtynge lyfe. And a lytle before in the ſayde chapter: He that beleueth in hym ſhall not be cōdemned. And to beleue in the wordes of thys article, is that eatynge of Chriſtes fleſh and drynkyng hys bloude, of the which is ſpoken Jhō.vi. The wordes whych I ſpeake are ſprete and lyfe and the fleſhe profyteth not at all, meanynge of the fleſhly eatynge of his body, & of the fleſhly drynkynge of his bloude.

To beleue in Chriſte.

Ther is therfore great difference betwene beleuyng that ther is a God & that Chriſt is God and mā, and to beleue in God and

Chriſt God and man, and in the promyſes of mercye that are in hym. The fyrſte is commune to good and bad, and vnto yͤ deuels alſo, & is called an hiſtorical faythe and belefe. The ſeconde is propre vnto the ſonnes of God, and is theyr lyfe, as it is wrytten: The ryghteous lyueth by fayth, that is, in puttynge hys truſte, confydence and whole hope in the goodneſſe, mercy, & helpe of God, in all aduerſities, bodely and gooſtly, and all temptacions, and euẽ in ſynne and hell, howe depe ſoeuer he be fallen therin.

But as he which feleth not his diſeaſe, can longe for no health: euen ſo it is impoſſyble for ony man to beleue in Chriſtes bloude excepte Moſes haue had hym fyrſte in cure, and wyth hys lawe haue robbed hym of hys ryghteouſneſſe, and condemned hym vnto euerlaſtynge death and haue ſhewed hym vnder what dampnation they are in by byrthe in Adam. And howe all theyr dedes (appeare they neuer ſo holy) are yet but damnable ſynne becauſe they can refer nothynge vnto the glorye of God, but ſeke themſelues, theyr owne profyte, honoure and glorye. So that repentaunce towarde the lawe muſte

go before thys belefe, and he whiche repenteth
not, but conſenteth vnto the lyfe of
ſynne, hath no parte in thys faythe.

Chriſte is oure lyfe.

And when Jhon calleth Chriſt the
euerlaſtynge lyfe that was wyth the father,
he ſignifyeth that Chriſt is our lyfe,
as after in the piſtle, and in the fyrſt alſo
of hys goſpell, ſayenge: In hym was lyfe.
For vntyll we receaue lyfe of Chriſt by
fayth, we are dead, and can be but deade,
as ſayeth Jhō in the .iii. He that beleueth
not in ẏ ſōne, can ſe no lyfe: but ẏ wrath
of God abydeth vpon him. Of the which
wrath we are heyres by byrthe ſayeth
Paul, Ephe .ii. Of the whiche wrath we
are ignoraunt, vntyll the lawe be publyſhed,
and walke quyetly after our luſtes
and loue God wyckedly, that he ſhuld be
content therewith and mayntayne vs therin,
contrary vnto his Godly and ryghteous
nature. But as ſoone as the lawe
(whoſe nature is to vtter ſynne. Rom .iii.
and to ſet man at variaunce, with God)
is preached, then we fyrſte awake out of
our dreame, and ſe our damnacyō, & hate
the lawe, which is ſo contrary vnto oure
nature, and grudge agaynſt God therto
as yonge chyldre do agaynſt theyr elders
whan

whan they fyrſt commaunde, and counte God a cruell tyraunt because of hys lawe in that he condemneth vs for that thynge whych we can not loue, nor of loue fulfyll.

But whan Chriſte is preached, howe yͭ God for hys ſake receaueth vs to mercy, and forgeueth vs all that is paſte, and hence forth rekeneth not vnto vs our corrupt and poyſoned nature, and taketh vs as hys ſonnes, and putteth vs vnder grace and mercy, & promyſeth that he wyll not iudge vs by the ryghteouſneſſe of the law but nourture vs wyth all mercy and pacience, as a father mooſt mercyfull, only yf we wyll ſubmytte our ſelues vnto hys doctrine and learne to kepe hys lawes: yee and he wyll therto conſyder oure mekeneſſe, and what ſo euer chaunceth neuer taketh awaye hys mercy, tyll we caſt of the yocke of oure profeſſion fyrſte, and runne awaye wyth vtter defiaunce, that we wyll neuer come more at ſcoole. Than oure ſtubburne and harde hartes mollify and waxe ſofte, and in the confydence and hope that we haue in Chriſte and hys kyndneſſe we go to God boldly as vnto our father and receaue lyfe, that is to ſay loue vnto God and vnto the lawe alſo.

That vvhich vve haue ſene & herd, vve declare vnto you, that ye may haue fellovvſhip vvyth vs, and that oure fellovvſhip may be vvyth the father, and vvyth hys ſonne Ieſus Chriſt. And theſe thynges vve vvryte vnto you that your ioye may be full.

The touche ſtone of all true doctrine and preachers.

To bryng vnto ẏ fellowſhip of God and Chriſt, & of them ẏ beleue in Chriſte, is the fynall intent of all the ſcripture, why it was geuen of God vnto man, and the only thynge whych all true preachers ſeke, and wherby ye ſhall euer knowe and diſcerne the true worde of God from all falſe & counterfayted doctrine of vayne tradicions: and the true preacher from the wylye ypocrites. We preach vnto you (ſayeth ſaynt Jhon) ẏ euerlaſtynge lyfe whych we haue herde, and in hearynge receaued thorow fayth, and are ſure of it, to drawe you to vs out of ẏ fellowſhip that ye haue wyth the damned deuels in ſynfull luſtes and ignoraunce of God, for we ſeke you, and not yours, as ſayeth ſaynt Paule the ii. to the Corinthiãs the .xii. Chapter. We loue you as our ſelues in God, & therfore wolde we haue you fellowes, and equall wyth vs, and buylde you vpon the fundacyon layde of the Apoſtles and Prophetes, which is Chriſt Jeſu, & make you of the houſhold of God for euer, ẏ ye & we, fellowes & brethrẽ, and coupled together in one ſprete, in one fayth, & in one hope, might haue eur fellowſhip therby wͭ god, and become his ſonnes and heyres, and with Jeſus Chriſt, beynge his brethren & coheyres, and to make your ioye full thorow that glad tydynge, as the angell sayd vnto the ſhepherdes. Luce.ii. Beholde I ſhewe you great ioye that ſhalbe vnto al people, how ẏ ther is a Saueoure borne vnto you this daye, which is Chriſte the LORD. And this tydynges we bryng you wyth the worde of God only, whiche we receaued of hys ſprete, and out of the mouth of his ſonne as true meſſangers.

We preach not our ſelues, but Chriſt our LORDE, & vs your ſeruaũtes for his ſake, we do not loue oureſelues, to ſeke yours vnto vs, that after we had wͭ wyles robbed you of all ye haue, we ſhulde exalte our ſelues ouer you, & ſeperate our ſelues from you, and make oure ſelues a ſeuerall kyngdome, fre and franke, raynyng ouer you as heythen tyrauntes, & holdynge you in bondage to ſerue for our lucre and luſtes, tanglynge your conſcience wyth doctrine of mã, whych draweth from God and Chriſte, and frayenge you wyth the bouge of excommunicacion agaynſt gods worde. Or yf that ſerued not ſhakynge a ſwearde at you.

And thys is the tydynges vvhych vve haue herde of him, and declare vnto you, that God is lyght, and in him is no darckneſſe at al. Yf vve ſaye that vve haue fellovvſhip vvyth hym, and yet vvalke in darkeneſſe, vve lye, and do not the truth. But and yf vve vvalke in lyght, as he is in lyght, thã haue vve fellovvſhip together, and the bloude of Chriſt hys ſonne, clenſeth vs from al ſynne.

As the deuell is darkeneſſe and lyes, ſo is God lyght and truth onely, and ther is no darkeneſſe of falſhed and conſentyng to wyckedneſſe in hym. And the bryghtneſſe of hys lyght is hys wordes doctrine as the.c.and.xviii. Pſalme ſayeth: Thy worde is a lanterne vnto my fete and a lyght to my pathes. And Chriſt is yͤ lyght that lyghteneth all men. And the Apoſtles are called the lyght of the worlde, becauſe of the doctrine. And al that know yͤ truth are

Chriſt and hys worde, are yͤ lyght

are lyght. Ye were once darkeneſſe (ſayeth Paule Epheſi. v.) but nowe lyghte in the LORDE: walke therfore as the chyldre of lyght. And good workes are called the frutes of lyght. And al that lyue in ignoraũce are called darknes, as he ſayeth afterward he yͤ hateth hys brother walketh in darkeneſſe. For yf the lyght of the glorious goſpell of Chriſte dyd ſhyne in hys harte, he coulde not hate hys brother.

Walkynge in darknes or in lyght

By walkynge vnderſtande, conſentynge, doynge, & workynge. Yf we walke than in darkneſſe, that is, conſent & worke wyckedneſſe, and ſaye we haue fellowſhip with God, we lye. For, to haue fellowſhip wyth hym, is to knowe and conſente and profeſſe hys doctrine in our hartes. Now yf the commaundementes of God be wrytten in oure hartes, oure membres can not but practyſe them, and ſhewe the frute of thẽ. So whether lyght or darknes be in the harte, it wyll appeare in the walkynge. For though our membres be neuer ſo deade vnto vertue, yet yf oure ſoules knowlege the truthe, and conſente vnto ryghteouſneſſe, we haue the ſprete of lyfe in vs. And therfore ſayeth Paule Roma. viii. Yf the ſprete of hym that rayſed vp Jeſus from death be in you, than wyl he that rayſed vp Jeſus from death, quycken your mortall bodyes, by the reaſō of the ſprete ẏ dwelleth in you. So ẏ it is not poſſible for hym that knoweth the truth, and conſenteth therto to continue in ſynne. And thā fynally yf we haue the lyght in our hartes and walke therin, than we haue fellowſhip wyth God, and are hys ſōnes and heyres, and are purged from all ſynne thorowe Chriſtes bloude.

Yf vve ſaye vve haue no ſynne, vve deceaue ourſelues, and the truthe is not in vs.

Yf we thynke ther is no ſynne in vs, we are begyled and blynde, and the lyghte of Gods worde is not in vs, and ether followe ſynne as beaſtes, wythout conſcience at all. Or yf we ſe the groſſe ſynnes, as murther, theft, and adultrye, yet we haue hanged a vayle of falſe gloſes vpon Moſes face, ⁊ do not ſe nor perceaue the brightneſſe of the lawe, how that it requyreth of vs as pure an harte to God, and as great loue vnto our neyghbours, as was in oure ſaueoure Jeſus, and ceaſſeth not before to condempne vs as ſynners.

Yf vve knovvlege our ſynnes, he is faythfull and iuſt to forgeue vs our ſynnes, and clenſe vs from all our vnryghteouſneſſe.

Yf we confeſſe our ſynnes, not in the preſtes eare, (though that tradicion reſtored vnto the ryghte vſe were not dampnable) but in oure hartes to God wyth true repentaunce and faſte belefe. Than is he faythfull to forgeue and to purge vs, becauſe of hys mercyful truth and promyſe. For he promyſed Abrahã that in hys ſede all the worlde ſhuld be bleſſed frõ the curſe of ſynne. And hath abundauntly renewed hys euerlaſtynge mercy vnto vs in yͤ new teſtamente, promyſynge that our ſynnes ſhalbe forgeuen vs in Chriſtes bloude, yf we repent and truſte therto.

Yf vve ſaye vve haue not ſinned, vve make hym a lyer, and hys vvorde is not in vs.

For hys worde teſtifyeth agaynſt vs, that we are all ſynners, yee ⁊ els Chriſte dyed in vayne. Salomon ſayeth. iii. Reg. viii. That ther is no mã that ſynneth not agaynſt God. And Paule proueth by the authorite of yͤ ſcripture vnto yͤ Romayns that we are al ſynners wythout excepciõ.

And the ſcripture wytneſſeth that we are damnable ſynners, and that oure nature is to ſynne. Whyche corrupte and poyſoned nature, thoughe it be begonne to be cured and healed, yet is it neuer therow whole vntyll the houre of death. For the whych cauſe wyth al oure beſt frutes, ther growe wedes amonge. Nother can ther be ony dede ſo perfecte that coulde not be amended. Whan a blynde bongler wondereth at hys glorious workes, a connyng workeman that hath a clere iudgement perceaueth that it is impoſſible to make a worke that coulde not be made better.

Now the lawe requyreth workes of vs in the hyghest degre of perfeccion and ceaſſeth not to accuſe vs, vntyll oure workes flowe naturally as glorious in perfeccion as the workes of Chriſte. And Chriſt teacheth vs to praye in oure Pater noſter: Forgeue vs oure treſpaſſes, as we forgeue oure treſpaſſers. Where by ye maye eaſely vnderſtande that we ſynne daylye one agaynſte another, and all agaynſt God. Chriſt taught alſo to praye that our father ſhulde not let vs ſlyp into temptacion: ſygnifyenge that our nature can not but ſynne, yf occaſions be geuen, excepte that God of hys eſpecyall grace kepe vs backe. Which prompte to ſynne is dãnable ſynne in the lawe of God. Dauid prayed in the.lxviii. Pſalme. Let not the tempeſt drowne me, let me not fall in to the bottom, and let not the pit ſhut hyr mouthe vpon me, as who ſhulde ſaye. Fyrſt kepe me God from ſynnynge, then yf I ſhall chaunce to fal as no fleſhe cã eſcape, one tyme or other, then call me ſhortly backe agayne, and let me not ſynke to depe therin: and thoughe I yet fall neuer ſo depe, yet LORD let not the waye of mercye be ſtopped, ſygnifyenge that it is impoſſible to ſtande of oureſelues, and much leſſe to ryſe agayne. Whiche impotencie and febleneſſe is damnable in the law of God, excepte that we ſawe it, and repẽted, and were fled to Chriſt for mercy: whych he geueth abundaũtly vnto thẽ that requyre it wyth a faythfull harte, and not wauerynge fayth.

¶ The.ii.Chapter.

MY lytle chyldren, I vvryte theſe thynges vnto you that ye ſynne not. And though ony man ſynne, yet vve haue an Aduocate vvith the father, euen Ieſus Chriſt, vvhich is ryghteous.

I wryte vnto you on the one ſyde, that God is lyghte, and therfore that no man which wyllinglye walketh in the vnfruteful workes of darkneſſe, hath any fellowſhyp wyth that lyght, or parte in ẏ bloude of his ſonne. And thys I wryte and teſtify vnto you my deare chyldren, that ye ſynne not, that is, ẏ ye conſent not vnto ſynne, [illegible] ſhulde ſynne of luſt and purpoſe malycyouſly: but contrary wyſe that ye feare god and reſyſt ſynne wyth all your myght and power, accordynge as ye haue promyſed. For who ſoeuer ſynneth of purpoſe after the knowlge of the truth, the ſame ſynneth agaynſt the holy gooſt remedyleſſe. Hebre. vi. and alſo .x.

And on the other ſyde, I teſtifye vnto you that we be alwaye ſynners, though not of purpoſe ⁊ malice, after the natur of damned deuels, but of infirmitie and frayltye of oure fleſh, whyche fleſh not only letteth vs that oure workes can not be perfect, but alſo nowe and then thorow manyfolde occaſions and temptacions caryeth vs clene oute of the ryghte waye, ſpyte of oure hartes. How be it (I ſaye) yf when the rage is paſt, we turne vnto the ryghte waye agayne, and confeſſe oure ſynnes vnto oure father wyth a repentynge harte, be hath promyſed vs mercye, and is true to fulfyll it. So that yf we ſynne not dyuellyſhlye agaynſt the holy gooſt, refuſynge the doctrine whiche we can not improue that it ſhulde not be true, but after yͤ frayltye of man, ther is no cauſe to diſpayre: For we haue an aduocat and an interceſſor wyth the father, euen Jeſus Chriſt that is ryghteous.

Aduocate.

The name of oure aduocat is Jeſus, that is to ſaye, a ſaueoure. Call hys name Jeſus ſayde the angell to Joſeph, for he ſhall ſaue his people from theyr ſynnes. Math.i. And thys aduocat and our Jeſus to ſaue vs from oure ſynnes, continueth euer, as it is wrytten. Hebre.vii. and hath Sempiternum ſacerdotium. an euerlaſtynge office to make an atonement for ſynne. By the reaſon wherof ſayeth the text, he is able euer to ſaue thē that come to God thorowe hym, wyth repentaunce and faythe, and lyueth euer, to ſpeake for vs. And beſyde that, oure Jeſus is God and almyghtye. He toke oure nature vpon hym, and felte all oure infyrmyties and ſykneſſes, and in felynge learned to haue compaſſion on vs, & for compaſſion cryed myghtely in prayers to God the father for vs, and was herd. And yͤ voyce of the ſame bloude that once cryed, (not for vẽgeaũce as Abels, but for mercye only) and was herd, cryeth nowe and euer, and is euer herd, as ofte as we cal vnto remẽbraunce wyth repentynge fayth howe that it was ſhed for our ſynnes. He is alſo called Chriſtus, that is to ſaye kynge anoynted with all myght and power ouer ſynne, death, & hel, and ouer all ſynnes, ſo that none that flyeth vnto hym, ſhall euer come into iudgement of damnatiõ. He is anoynted wyth all fulneſſe of grace and hath al the treaſure and riches of the ſprete of God in hys hande, wyth ỷ whych he bleſſeth al men, accordynge to the promyſe made to Abraham, and is therto mercyfull to geue vnto all that cal on hym. And how much he loueth vs, I report me vnto the enſample of hys dedes.

Chriſtus.

And he is ryghteous, both toward God in that he neuer ſynned, and therfor hath optayned al his fauoure and grace, and alſo towarde vs, in that he is true to fulfyll all the mercye that he hath promyſed vs, euen vnto the vttermooſt iote.

And he is the ſatiſfaction for our ſynnes, & not for oures only, but alſo for al the vvorldes.

Satiſfactiõ what it is.

That I call ſatiſfaction, the Greke cal

leth Ilaſmos, and the Hebrewe Copar. And it is fyrſt taken for the ſwagynge of woundes, ſores, and ſwellynges, and the takynge away of payne and ſmart of thē. And thence is borowed for the pacifyeng and ſwagynge of wrath and anger, and for an amendes makynge, a contentyng, ſatiſfaction, a raunſome, and makynge at one, as it is to ſe abundatlye in the Byble. So that Chriſte is a full contentynge, ſatiſfaction and raunſone for our ſynnes. And not for oures only whyche are Apoſtles and diſciples of Chriſt whyle he was yet here, or for oures whiche are Jewes or Iſraelites and the ſede of Abraham, or for ours that nowe beleue at this preſent tyme: but for all mens ſynnes, both for theyr ſynnes whiche went before and beleued the promyſes to come, and for oures which haue ſene them fulfilled, and alſo for all them whiche ſhall afterwarde beleue vnto the worldes ende, of what ſo euer nation or degre they be. For Paule commaundeth .i. Timothe.ii. to praye for all mē & all degrees, ſayeng that to be acceptable vnto our ſaueoure God, which wyll haue all men ſaued and come to the knowlege of the truth, that is ſome of all nations and al degrees, and not the

Jewes only. For (ſayeth he) ther is one God, and one mediatoure betwene God and man, the man Chriſte Jeſus, which gaue hymſelf a redemption and ful ſatiſfaction for all men. Dauid alſo ſayde in yͤ xviii. Pſalme: Theyr ſounde is gone thorowout all the earth. So that the benefyte ſtretched on all men.

Let thys therfore be an vndoubted article of thy faythe, not of an hyſtorye faythe as thou beleueſt a geſte of Alexandre, or of the olde Romaynes, but of a lyuely faythe and beleſe, to putte thy truſt and confydẽce in, and to bye and ſell theron, as we ſay, & to haue thy ſynnes takẽ away, & thy ſoule ſaued therby, yf thou hold it faſt: and to cõtinue euer in ſynne, & to haue thy ſoule damned yf thou let it ſlyp, that our Jeſus, oure ſaueoure that ſaueth hys people from theyr ſynnes, & oure Chriſt, that is oure kynge ouer all ſynne, death, and hell, anoynted with fulneſſe of all grace, and with the ſprite of God, to diſtribut vnto all men, hath accordynge vnto the Epiſtle to the Hebrues and all the ſcripture, in the dayes of hys mortall fleſhe, wyth faſtynge, prayenge, ſufferynge and cryenge to God myghtely for vs, & wyth ſheddynge hys bloude made full ſatiſfactiõ tiſfaction both a pena and a culpa (wyth oure holy fathers leue) for all the ſynnes of the worlde, bothe of theyrs that wente before, and of theyrs that come after in the fayth, whether it be origynall ſynne or actuall. And not only the ſynnes committed with conſent to euell in tyme of ignorau͂ce before the knowlege of the truthe: but alſo the ſynnes done of fraylte after we haue forſaken euell, and conſented to the lawes of God in oure hartes, and walke in the lyght of hys doctryne.

He ſaueth his people from theyr ſynnes Math.i. and that he only. So that ther is none other name to be ſaued by. Actu.iiii. And vnto hym beare all the Prophetes recorde, that al that beleue in hym, ſhall receaue remyſſion of theyre ſynnes, in hys name. Actu the.x.chap. And by hym only we haue an entrynge in vnto yͤ father and vnto all grace. Ephe.ii.and.iii.and.Ro.v. And as many as come before him are theues and murtherers. Joh.x. that is, who ſo euer preacheth eny other forgeueneſſe of ſynne then thorow fayth in his name, the ſame ſlayeth the ſoule.

Chriſt only is oure Saueoure.

Thys to be true, not onely of orygynall but alſo of actuall, and aſwell of that we commytte after our profeſſyon, as be fore, mayeſt thou euidently ſe by yͤ enſāples of the ſcripture. Chriſte forgaue the woman takẽ in adultery. Joh.viii. and another whom he healed Joh.v. And he forgaue publycanes and open ſynners, and put none to do penaunce as they call it, for to make ſatiſfaccyon for the ſynne & which he forgaue thorow repentaunce & fayth, but enioyned them the lyfe of penaunce, the profeſſion of theyr baptyme, to tame the fleſh in kepynge the cõmaundementes, and that they ſhulde ſynne no more. And thoſe ſynners were for yͤ moſt parte Jewes, & had theyr originall ſynne forgeuen them before thorowe fayth in the teſtament of God. Chriſt forgaue his Apoſtles theyr actuall ſynnes after theyr profeſſion which they commytted in denyenge hym, and put none to do penaunce for ſatiſfaccyon. Peter Actu.ii. abſolueth the Jewes thorow repentaũce and fayth frõ theyr actuall ſynnes, which they dyd in conſentynge vnto Chriſtes death, and enioyned them no penaũce to make ſatiſfaccion. Paule alſo had his actuall ſynnes forgeuen hym frely thorow repentaunce and fayth, without mentiõ of ſatiſfaccyon. Actu.ix. So yͭ accordynge vnto this preſente texte of Jhon, yf it

chaũce

chaunce vs to ſynne of fraylte, let vs not deſpayre, for we haue an aduocate and interceſſour, a true attourney wyth the father Jeſus Chriſte ryghteous towarde God and man, and is the reconcilynge & ſatiſfaccion for our ſynnes.

For Chriſtes workes are perfecte, ſo that he hath obtayned vs all mercy & hath ſet vs in the full ſtate of grace & fauoure of God, and hath made vs as welbeloued as the angels of heauen, thoughe we be yet weake. As the yonge chyldren though they can do no good at all, are yet as tenderly beloued as the olde. And God for Chriſtes ſake hath promyſed that what ſo euer euell we ſhall do, yet yf we turne & repente, he wyll neuer more thynke on our ſynnes.

Popyſh forgeueneſſe.

Thou wylt ſay, God forgeueth the diſplayſure but we muſte ſuffre payne to ſatiſfye the ryghteouſneſſe of God. A thã God hath a ryghteouſneſſe whych maye not forgeue payne and all, that the poore ſynner myght go ſkot fre wythout ought at all. God was vnryghteous to forgeue the thefe hys payne, and all thorow repentaunce and fayth, vnto whom for lacke of leaſure was no penaunce enioyned. And my fayth is, that what ſo euer enſample of mercy God hath ſhewed one, that ſame he hath promyſed all. Yf I owe you.xx.li. ye wyl forgeue me, that is, ye wyl nomore be angrye, but I ſhall paye you the twety poundes: O popyſhe forgeueneſſe, wyth whome it goeth after the commune prouerbe, no peny no pardon. Hys fatherhead geueth pardon frely, but we muſt pay mony abundauntly.

Paules doctrine is. Roma.iiii. Yf a man worke, it oughte not to be ſayde, that hys hyre was geuen hym of grace or fauoure, but of duety: But to hym that worketh not, but beleueth in hym that iuſtifyeth the vngodlye, hys fayth (he ſayeth not hys workes although he commaūdeth vs diligentlye to worke, and deſpyſeth none that God commaundeth,) hys fayth (ſayeth he) is rekened hym for ryghteouſneſſe. Confirmynge hys ſayenge wyth the teſtimony of the prophete Dauid in the.xxxi. Pſalme, ſayenge: Bleſſed is the man vnto whome God imputeth or rekeneth not hys ſynne: that is to ſaye, whych man although he be a ſynner, yet God layed it not vnto hys charge for hys faythes ſake. And in the.xi. he ſayeth. Yf it come of grace than it commeth not of workes. For than were grace no grace ſayeth he. For it was a very ſtraunge ſpeakynge in Paules eares to call that grace that came of deſeruynge of workes: Or that deſeruynge of workes, whyche came by grace. For he rekened workes and grace to be contrarye in ſuch maner of ſpeche. But oure holy father hath coupled them together of pure lyberalite I dare ſaye, and not for couetouſneſſe. For as hys holyneſſe, yf he haue a cauſe agaynſte ony man, immediatlye breatheth out an excommunicacion vpon hym, and wyl haue ſatiſfaccion for the vttermooſt farthynge and ſomewhat aboue, to teache them to beware agaynſte another tyme, yer he wyll bleſſe agayne from the terrible ſentence of hys heuy curſe: Euen ſo of that bleſſed complexion he deſcribeth the nature of the mercy of God, that God wyl remytte hys anger to vs vpon the appoyntment of oure ſatiſfaccion. Where as the ſcripture ſayeth: Chriſte is oure ryghteouſneſſe, iuſtifyenge, oure redempcion, oure attonemente, that hath appeaſed God, and clenſed vs from our ſynnes, & all in hys bloude, ſo that hys bloude is the ſatiſfaccion only.

Workes cã be no ſatiſfaccion for ſynnes to Godwarde.

And that thou mayeſt the better perceaue the falſhed of our holy fathers fleſhly ymaginacion, call to mynde howe that the ſcripture ſayeth, Johan.iiii. God is a ſprete, ⁊ muſt be worſhipped in the ſprete: that is, repentaunce, fayth, hope, and loue towarde hys lawe and our neghboure for hys ſake, is hys worſhip in the ſprete. And therfore who ſo euer worſhippeth God wyth workes, and referreth hys workes to God, to be a ſacrifice vnto hym, to appeace hym, as thoughe he delyted in the worke for the workes ſake, the ſame maketh of God an ymage or ydoll, and is an ymage ſeruer, and as wycked an ydolatrer, as euer was ony blynde heythen, ⁊ ſerueth God after ẏ ymaginacion of hys owne harte, ⁊ is abominable vnto God, as thou ſeyſt in how many places God defyeth the ſacrifyce of the chyldren of Iſrael, for the ſayd ymaginacyon. So that who ſo euer ſuppoſeth that hys candle ſtickynge before the ymage, hys puttynge a peny in ẏ boxe, hys goynge a pylgrimage hys faſtynge, hys wolwarde goynge, bare foote goynge, hys crouchynge, knelynge, and paxe takynge, be ſacrifice vnto god as though he delyted in them, as we in ẏ geſtures of Iacknapes, is as blinde, as he that gropeth for hys waye at noone.

Gods worſhip. Gods worſhip is to loue hym for hys mercy, and of loue beſtowe all oure workes vpon our neghboure for hys ſake, and vpon the tamynge of oure fleſhe, that we ſynne not agayne, whych ſhulde be yͤ chefeſt care of a chriſten man: whyle Chriſt careth for that, that is once paſt and commytted already, whether before oure profeſſion or after. For the condicions of the peace that is made betwene God and vs in Chriſtes bloude are theſe: The lawe is ſet before vs, vnto the whych yf we conſente and ſubmyt our ſelues, to be ſcolers therof, than are not only all oure foreſynnes forgeuen, both pena and culpa (wyth oure fathers lycence euer) but alſo of oure infirmities, weakneſſe, pronite, redyneſſe & motions vnto ſynne are pardoned and taken aworth, and we tranſlated from vnder the damnacion of the lawe, which dampneth as wel thoſe infirmities as the ſynne that ſpryngeth of them, and putteth vs vnder grace, Ro.vii. So that we ſhall not hence forth, as longe as we forſake not oure profeſſion be iudged by the ryghteouſneſſe of the lawe, but chaſtiſed yf we do amyſſe, as chyldren that are vnder no lawe. Now than yf God in Chriſt pardō our infirmyties, by reaſō of whych we can not eſcape but that we ſhall now and than ſynne: it followeth that he muſt

lyke

lykewyſe pardon the actuall ſynne whych we do, compelled of thoſe infyrmities in ſpyte of oure hartes and agaynſt the wyll of the ſpryte. For yf thou pardon the ſyckeneſſe of the ſycke, than muſte thou pardon the dedes whych he doth or leaueth vndon by the reaſon of hys ſyckneſſe. Yf the madneſſe of a madde man be pardoned, and vnder no lawe, than yf he murther in hys madneſſe, he maye not be ſlayne agayne. Yf chyldren wythin a certayne age are not vnder the lawe that ſlayeth theues, than can ye not of ryght hāge thē, though they ſteale. What Poppyſh pardonynge were that? Thys doth Paule Roma. the vii. chap. ſo confirme, that all ẏ worlde can not quytch agaynſt it, ſayenge: I conſente vnto the lawe of God that it is good, and ſayne wolde I do it, and yet haue I not alwayes power ſo to do, but fynde another thynge in my fleſhe, rebellynge agaynſte the wyll of my mynde, and leadynge me captiue into ſynne, ſo that I can not do that I wolde do, but I am compelled to do that I wolde not. Yf (ſayeth he) I do that I wolde not, than I do it not, but the ſynne that dwelleth in me doth it, and thā ſayeth he: Who ſhall delyuer me from thys body of death, in the whyche I am

bounde

Chriſtes victory.

bounde preſoner agaynſt my wyl. Thankes be to God (ſayeth he) thorowe Jeſus Chriſt our LORDE, whych hath conquered & ouercome ſinne, death, and hel, & hath put the damnacion of the lawe out of the waye, vnto all that profeſſe the lawe & beleue in hym. We be vnder the law to learne it, and to faſhion oure dedes as lyke as we can: but not vnder the damnacion of the lawe, that we ſhulde be damned thoughe oure dedes were not as perfecte as the law requyreth, or thoughe of fraylte we at a tyme brake it. As chyldren are vnder the lawe that they ſteale not, but not vnder the damnacion thoughe they ſteale. So that all they that are grafted into Chriſte to followe hys doctrine, are vnder yͤ lawe to learne it only, but are delyuered from feare of euerlaſtynge death and hell, and all the threatenynges of the lawe, and frõ conſcience of ſynne, whyche feared vs frõ God. And we are come in to God thorowe the confidence that we haue in Jeſus Chriſte, & are as famylyar and bolde wyth hym, as yonge innocente chyldren whyche haue no conſcience of ſynne, are wyth theyr fathers and mothers, or them that noryſh them. Whych were impoſſible yf God now (as the B. of Ro. paynteth hym)dyd ſhake a rodde at vs of .vii. yeares puniſhment, as ſharpe as the paynes of hel for euery treſpas we do, whych treſpaſſes for the nombre of them were lyke to make our purgatorye almooſt as lõge as hel, ſeynge we haue no gods word that we ſhalbe deliuered thence, vntyl we haue payde the laſt farthynge. And therfore coulde our conſcience neuer be at reſt nor be bolde and familiar wyth God.

Bynde and lowſe.

Note thys texte.

Yf ye ſay the B. of R. can delyuer my conſcience from feare of purgatorye (as hys poetrye onely putteth me in feare) & that by thys texte: what ſo euer thou byndeſt on earth. &c. Yf thou thys way vnderſtande the texte, what ſo euer thou beyng in earth, louſeſt any where, than myghte he louſe in hel & bynde in heauẽ. But why maye not J take the texte of Chriſt, Jhon xvi. what ſo euer ye aſke my father in my name he wyll geue it you, and deſyre forgeueneſſe of altogether in Chriſtes name both a pena & culpa, and than remayneth no ſuche purgatory at all. How be it the texte of byndynge and louſynge is but borowed ſpeche, howe that after the ſimilitude of worldly byndyng & louſynge, lockyng & vnlockyng, ÿ worde of God truely preached doth bynd & louſe the cõſcience.

God ſayeth to Hieremy the prophete in his.i.Chap. Behold I geue the power ouer nations and kyngdoms, to plucke vp by ẏ rootes and to ſheuer in peces, to deſtroye and caſt downe, & to buyld and plāt. How dyd he deſtroye nations and kyngdomes, and how dyd he buyld thē? verely by preachyng and prophecieng. What natiō kyngdome or Cytie he prophecyed to be ouerthrowen, was ſo. And what Cytie he prophecyed to be buylt agayne, was ſo: and what nation, after they wer brought into captiuitie he prophecied to be reſtored agayn, were ſo: and whom he prophecied to peryſhe, peryſhed: and whō he prophecyed to be ſaued, was ſaued.

Euen ſo whō ſo euer a true preacher of Gods word ſayth ſhalbe dāned for his ſin, becauſe he wyll not repent and beleue in Chriſt, the ſame is dāned: and whō ſo euer a true preacher of gods word ſayth ſhalbe ſaued, becauſe he repenteth & beleueth in Chriſtes bloud, ẏ ſame is ſaued. And thys is the byndynge and loſyng ẏ Chriſt ment

Not withſtondyng ye muſt vnderſtōde that whē we haue ſynned, though our hartes were not to ſynne, & though we repent yer the dede be done, yet the body in ſynnynge hath ouercōme the ſprite, and hath gotte the maſtry. So that ẏ ſprite is nowe weaker and febler to vertue and to follow the lawe of God ⁊ doctrine of Chriſt, and the fleſh ſtronger to followe vice ⁊ ſynne. Wherfore as when an olde ſore is broken forth agayn, we begynne as it were a new cure wyth greater diligẽce and more care thẽ before: euẽ ſo here we muſt renewe our olde battayle agaynſt ẏ fleſh, ⁊ more ſtrongly go to worke, to ſubdue it, accordyng to the profeſſion of our baptyme which is ẏ very ſacrament or ſygne of repẽtaũce, or yf they wyl ſo haue it called penaũce, by ẏ interpretatiõ of Paule Ro. vi. For ẏ plungyng in to ẏ water, as it betokẽneth on ẏ one parte ẏ Chriſt hath waſhed our ſoules with his bloude, euen ſo on ẏ other parte it ſygnifyeth ẏ we haue promyſed to quench and ſlaye ẏ luſtes of the fleſh, with prayer faſtynge, and holy meditacion, after the doctryne of Chriſt, ⁊ with al godly exerciſe that tame the fleſhe and kylle not ẏ man.

Howe penaũce came vp ⁊ purgatory.

Wher vpon the byſſhoppes that ſucceded the Apoſtles, (when men had don ony open ſynnes) enioyned them penaunce as they call it, by the authorite of the congregacion and gouerners therof, and aduyſe of the mooſt wyſe and diſcrete, and with ẏ wyllynge conſente of the treſpaſſers, to tame the fleſh, as to go wolward, to wear ſhyrtes of heere, to go bare foote and bare heade, to praye, to faſte bread and water, ſome once in yͤ weke, ſome twyſe or all the weke, an whole yeare.ii.yeares.iii. yeares vii.yeares.xx.yeares, and ſome all theyre lyues longe, and to go on pylgrimage, to vyſet the memoriall of Saynts, to ſtrẽgth them the better to followe theyr enſample and ſuch lyke, & all to ſlay the worldly mynde of the fleſhe. Whiche maner when it was once receaued of the people by coſtume, it became a lawe. And the byſhops by lytle and lytle gat it whole into theyr owne handes.

When byſhoppes ſawe that, how they had gotten the ſymple people vnder them in ſuche humble obedience, they beganne to ſet vp theyr creſtes, and to raygne ouer them as princes, and to enioyne ſore penaunce for ſmalle trifles, namelye yf ought were done agaynſte theyre pleaſure and ſome they bet ſore, and ſpared other, & ſolde theyr penauuce to the ryche, and ouerladed the poore, vntyl the tyranny was waxen ſo greuous, that the people wolde beare it no lenger. For by thys tyme what wyth the multitude of Ceremonyes and heape of mens conſtitucions, whoſe ryght vſe was therto clene forgotten: and partly because oure ſhepeherdes were buſyed to ſeke themſelues and theyr hye authorite, and exalted euery man hys trone, & were become wolues vnto the flock. The cauſe why the people were diſobediēt vnto wholſome counſel was, that the worde of God was ſore darkened and no where purely preached. And therfore the prelates loth to loſe theyr hygh authorite & to let the people go fre out of theyr pocke beganne to turne theyr tale and ſynge a newe ſonge, howe that thys penaūce was enioyned to make ſatiſfaction to God for the ſynne that was committed, robbynge our ſoules of the frute of Chriſtes bloude and makynge vs image ſeruaūtes, referrynge oure dedes vnto the perſon of God and worſhyppynge hym as an ymage of our owne ymaginatiō with bodely worke ſaynge morouer: Yf we wold not do ſuche penaunce here at theyr iniunctions, we muſt do it in another worlde, and fayned purgatory where we muſte ſuffre. vii. yeares for euery ſinne. And whē ỹ kyngdō of Antichriſt was ſo enlarged, that it muſt haue an heade, they ſet vp our holy father of Rome, or he rather vſurped the rowme wyth vyolence, & to hym was geuē thys

Here was purgatorye kyndled.

prerogatiue to ſell whom he wolde from purgatorye.

And the ſacramẽt of penaũce they thus deſcribe: Contrition, Confeſſion, and Satiſfaction. Contrition, ſorowe for thy ſynnes: Confeſſion, not to God and them whom thou haſt offended: but tel thy ſynnes in the preſtes eare: Satiſfactiõ to do certayne dedes enioyned of them to bye out thy ſynnes. And in theyr deſcription they haue clene excluded the fayth in the ſatiſfactiõ of Chriſtes bloude, which only bringeth lyfe and the ſprite of life, & righteouſneſſe, and without the which it is vnpoſſible to pleaſe God. Hebr. xi. In whoſe ſteade they haue put in the preſumpcyon of our owne workes. And for lack of truſt in Chriſtes bloude, our contritiõ is but a fruteleſſe ſorowe in the reſpecte of hell, which maketh vs hate the lawe ſtyll, and conſequently God that made it, where true contrition annexed with fayth is ſorowe in reſpect of the lawe, vnto yͤ which we conſent that it is good, and loue it, & therfor mourne partely becauſe we haue offended it, and partely becauſe we lacke power to fulfyll it as we wolde.

These thynges to be true oure prelates knowe by opẽ hiſtoryes, as wel, as that it is noone whē the Sōne is flat ſowth: but it delyteth them to reſiſte the holy gooſt, and to perſecute ỹ preachers of the thynges, which yf they as well loued them as they knowe them to be true, they wolde preache the ſame them ſelues, and lyue therafter. Hereby ye may ſe ỹ our workes are but to tame the fleſhe only, and can be no ſatiſfactiō to God, except we make hym an image, and oure ſelfes image ſeruaūtes. And hereby ye may ſe how out of thys open penaunce came the eare cōfeſſiō, ſatiſfactiō of workes, purgatorye and pardons. For when they had putte the ſatiſfaction of Chriſtes bloude out of the waye, then as they compelled men to confeſſe open ſynnes, and to take opē penaunce, euen ſo they compelled them to confeſſe ſecrete ſynnes and to take ſecrete penaunce. And as they made marchaundiſe of opē penaūce, ſo dyd they of ſecrete. And for them that wold not receaue ſuche pardon, fayned they purgatorye: and for thē that receaued them, fayned they pardon: turnynge byndyng and loſyng with preachynge Gods worde vnto byenge and ſellynge ſynne for mony. And ſence that tyme hetherto, the worſe the people were, the better were the prelates contēte, euer reſiſtynge that they ſhuld be made better thorow theyr bleſſed couetouſneſſe and proude deſyre of honoure.

And out of thys falſe preſumption of workes, ſprange the wycked vowes of relygion, which they vowe to make ſatiſfaction for ſynne, and to be hygher in heauē, in ſteade of the lyfe of penaunce which Chriſt taught vs in the Goſpell to tame the fleſh and to crucifye the mēbres wyth all, that we hence forth ſhulde walke in ÿ wayes of Gods law, and ſynne nomore.

And to ſpeak of worſhyppyng of ſayntes & prayeng, vnto thē & of that we make thē our aduocates wel nye aboue Chriſte, or altogether, thoughe it requyre a longe diſputacyon, yet it is as bryght as ÿ daye to all that knowe the truth, how that our faſtynge of theyr euens, & kepynge theyr holy dayes, goynge bare foote, ſtyckynge vp of candels in the bryghte daye in the worſhippe of them, to optayne theyr fauoure, or geuynge them ſo coſtly yewels, offerynge into theyr boxes, clothynge theyr ymages, ſhuynge them with ſyluer ſtues, with an ouch of Criſtal in ÿ myddes, to ſtrake the lyppes and eyes of the ygnoraunt, as a man wolde ſtrake yonge chyldrens heades, to entyce thē & brynge them in, and rocke them aſlepe in ygnoraunce: are wyth all lyke ſeruyce playne ydolatrye, that is in Englyſhe ymage ſeruyce. For the ſayntes are ſpretes, and can haue no delectacion in bodely thynges. And becauſe thoſe bodelye dedes can be no ſeruyce vnto the ſpirituall ſayntes, and we do them not to be a ſeruyce to oure ſelues or our neghbours: we ſerue the worke and the falſe ymaginacion of oure fleſhlye wytte, after the doctrine of man, and not of God, and are ymage ſeruauntes. And thys is it that Paule calleth ſeruire elemẽtis mundi, to be in captiuite vnder domme ceremonies and vayne traditions of mens doctryne, and to do the worke for the worke it ſelfe, as though God delyted therin for the dede it ſelfe, wythoute all other reſpecte.

But and ye wyll know the true worſhyppynge of ſayntes, herken vnto Paule Philip. ii. where he ſayeth: Ye ſhyne as lyghtes in the worlde, holdynge faſte the worde of lyfe vnto my glory or worſhyp, agaynſte the daye of Jeſu Chriſte, that J haue not runne nor laboured in vayne. That is to wete, the worſhyp whyche all true ſayntes now ſeke, and the worſhippe, that all the true meſſaungers of God ſeke thys daye, or euer ſhal ſeke, is to draw all to Chriſte wyth preachynge the true worde of God, and wyth the enſample of pure lyuynge faſhioned therafter. Wyl ye therfore worſhip ſayntes truely? than are what they preached, and beleue theyr doctrine. And as they followed that doctrine, ſo cõforme your lyuynge lyke vnto theyrs. And that ſhalbe vnto theyr hygh worſhip in the commynge agayne of Chriſt (whan all mens dedes ſhall appeare, & euery man ſhalbe iudged and receaue hys rewarde accordynge vnto hys dedes) howe that they not onely whyle they here lyued, but alſo after theyr death wyth the enſãple of theyr doctrine and lyuynge lefte behynde in wrytynge and other memorials, vnto the enſample of them that ſhulde followe, wãne vnto Chriſt them that were borne .v. hundreth, yee a thouſande yeares after theyr death. Thys was theyr worſhip in yͤ ſpret at the begynnynge as they were ſpretes, & lyghtes were ſtycked before theyr memorials at the begynnynge to be a ceremonye to put vs in remembraũce that we ſo prayſed the ſayntes and boaſted theyr lyuynges that we followed theyr enſamples in our dedes, as Chriſte ſayeth Math. v. Let your lyght ſo ſhyne before men, that they

The ſtyckynge vp of candels before ymages.

ſe youre good workes , and glorifye youre father that is in heauen . For preachynge of the doctrine, whyche is lyght , hath but ſmall effecte to moue the harte, yf the enſample of lyuynge do diſagre.

And that we worſhip ſayntes for feare leſt they ſhulde be diſpleaſed and angrye wyth vs, ⁊ plage vs or hurte vs , (as who is not afrayed of ſaynte Laurence? who darre deny ſaynt Anthonye a fleſe of woll for feare of hys terrible fyre , or leſte he ſende the pockes among our ſhepe?) is they then ymage ſeruyce, and clene agaynſt the fyrſte commaundemente, whych is: Heare Iſrael the LORDE thy God is one God. Now God in the Hebrwe is called Elor ⁊ Elohim in the plurel nombre, ſtrength or myght. So that the commaundement is : Heare Iſrael he that is thy power ⁊ might thy ſwearde and ſhylde is but one, that is, ther is none of myght to helpe or hurte the ſaue one, whych is altogether thyne at thy commaundement, yf thou wylte heare his voyce only . And all other myght in the worlde, is borowed of hym. And he wyll lende no myght agaynſt the contrarye to hys promyſes: kepe therfore hys commaũdementes, and he ſhall kepe the . And yf thou haue broken them, and he haue lente

Note thys for the fyrſt cōmaundement .

of hys power agaynſt the, repente & come agayne vnto thy profeſſion, and he wyl returne agayne vnto hys mercye and fetche hys power home agayne, whyche he lente to vexe the, becauſe thou forſokeſt hym and brakeſt hys commaundementes. And feare none other creature: for falſe feare is the cauſe of all Idolatrye.

Moreouer all we that are baptyſed in Chriſt haue profeſſed to do good for euell, and not to auenge oure ſelues. And many of vs come to ſuch perfeccion that we can be prouoked by no temptacion to deſyre vengeaunce, but haue compaſſion, and mekely praye for them that ſlaye vs.

How wycked a thynge than is it to thynke that the ſayntes trouble and plage vs, becauſe we do them not ſuche ſuperſticious honoure, whych is theyr diſhonoure and oure ſhame? It is verely a Popyſh ymaginacion, and euen to deſcribe the ſayntes after the nature of our prelates, which be meke and lowly tyll they be where they wolde be: But whan they be once alofte, they playe the tormentours yf we wyl not honoure them, & do what ſoeuer they commaunde more earneſtly, than that whych God hymſelfe hath commaunded, & feare them aboue God hymſelfe.

And it can be but lyke abominacion alſo, that we choſe of a fleſhly mynde euery man hys ſeuerall ſaynte, or rather ſeueral God, to be our aduocates, attorneys mediatours, (whā ther is but one.i.Tim.ii) and interceſſours, and call them oure aduouryes, whan we myght better call them our adulterers, and ſerue them, or rather a paynted poſt in theyr ſteade, wyth our ymage ſeruice, therewyth to bynde them for to helpe vs, whan ſoeuer and for whatſoeuer we cal vnto them, and to ſaue our ſoules therto wyth theyr prayers and merites & wyll yet nother heare the doctrine or followe the enſample of lyuynge (whyche is theyr onely honoure in the ſprete) of ony ſaynt, whoſe doctrine & lyuyng is autētyk

Aduouryes

For fyrſt, God whych alone hath power to helpe or hurte, hath made appoyntmēt betwixt hym & vs in Chriſtes bloude & hath bounde hymſelfe to geue vs what ſo euer we axe in his name, teſtifyeng therto that ther is none other name to be ſaued by, and that he wilbe a father vnto vs and ſaue vs both in this lyfe, and in the lyfe to come, and take vs from vnder the damnacion of the lawe, and ſet vs vnder grace & mercy, to be ſcolers only to learne the law and that our vnperfecte dedes ſhalbe takē in worth: yee and thoughe at a tyme we marre all thorowe oure infirmyte, yet yf we turne agayne, that ſhalbe forgeuen vs mercyfully, ſo that we ſhalbe vnder no dānacion: whych teſtament is confirmed wᵗ ſygnes and wonders wrought thorow the holy gooſt. Now thys indented obligaciō layde aparte, we make another of oure owne ymaginacion betwene the ſayntes & vs, in theyr merytes for our ymage ſeruyce Whych can be but a falſe fayth, ſeynge it hath not Gods worde (vnto whych alone we ought to cleue) but it is alſo clene contrarye therto.

Of the merytynge of ſayntes.

And agayne the ſayntes were not ſaued thorowe theyr owne merytes, but thorow Chriſtes. Nother were theyr dedes, whych they dyd after they were receaued vnder grace, ſufficient in themſelues to fulfyll the lawe for the preſent tyme, ſaue as Chriſtes merytes dyd ſupplye the imperfectneſſe of them, and that whych was lackynge on theyr parte thorowe theyr infirmytyes. And therfore as the ſayntes holy workes made no ſatiſfaccion for the ſynne that they dyd before they were receaued vnder mercy: euen ſo made they none for the deadly ſynnes, whyche they dyd vnder mercy: ſeyng the dedes were vnperfecte and had ſynne annexed vnto them by reaſon of the fleſh, and were inſufficient to excuſe theyr owne mayſters. What meryetes haue they in ſtore for vs than, ſeynge by all mens confeſſion they nowe merye not? Yf the mooſt obedient chylde in the worlde diſobeye hys fathers commaundementes, hys fore good dedes can not make that diſobedience to be no ſynne, or to be a ſatiſfaccion, that the chylde ſhuld preſume in the cōfidence of hys olde dedes & thynk hys father ſhulde do hym wronge to punyſhe hym. But he muſte knowlege hys faulte, and that he hath deſerued punyſhement, and deſyre forgeueneſſe vnto the glorye of hys fathers mercyfulneſſe, and not of hys olde dedes, thoughe hys olde obedience be a greate preſumpcion that he ſynneth of frayltye and not of purpoſe. Euen ſo yf I beynge as holy as euer was Paule in hys mooſt holyneſſe, ſynne thys day thorow fraylty of my fleſh, myne old good dedes can be no ſatiſfaccion, but I muſte knowlege my ſynne vnto my father and graunte that I haue deſerued damnacion, & mekely deſyre forgeueneſſe, and chalēge it by the obligacion where in God hathe bounde hymſelfe to me, vnto the glorye of the mercye of God, and not to the glory of my holy dedes. For yf my dedes ſaue me, it is my glory. But yf he forgeue frely without reſpect of my dedes, then it is the glorye of his mercy by Paules doctrine vnto the Romaynes.

Moreouer yf the ſayntes be in heauen, then can they be there in none other caſe thē ȳ aungels, in which ſtate Chriſt teſtifyeth they ſhalbe in the reſurrection. Now the aungels are myniſters ſente of God to do ſeruyce vnto the electe which ſhalbe ſaued. Hebr.i. And hath boūde hym ſelfe yf I come in the ryght waye by the dore of Chriſtes bloude, and are helpe, ȳ he wyll ſende me (yf nede be,) an hundreth legions of aungels or ſayntes. But when God hath bounde hymſelfe to ſende me aungels or ſayntes, or an angel or ſaynt, he hath not promyſed to ſende this angel or that, or this or that ſaint. And therfore whan I appoynt God whom he ſhal ſend, and bynde hym where he hath not boūde hymſelfe, to ſende me what ſaynt I wyl, I tempt God. And thus this choſynge of ſeueral ſayntes is but temptynge of God. And yet we do worſe then this: for we leaue the way of Chriſtes bloude and go not to God thorow hym, but runne to ȳ ſayntes in a teſtament of our owne makynge

The angels ſerue vs.

kynge, ⁊ wyll that they ether ſaue vs them ſelues for our ymage ſeruyce, or compell God for theyr merytes ſakes to ſaue vs. Why goeſt thou not vnto thy father thyn owne ſelfe? I am a ſynner wyll they ſaye ⁊ dare not. Yf thou go in the ryght waye, thou haſt no ſynne. Chriſte hath taken all thy ſynnes from the, and God hath no rod in hys hande, nor loketh ſoure, but merely, that it is a luſt to beholde hys cherfull coūtenaunce, and offereth the hys hande. But thys waye is ſtopped vp thorow vnbeleſe, and therfore we ſeke another whyche is no way to lyfe, but vnto euerlaſtynge death. We wyll not loke on the lawe wyth open eyes, and therfore haue we no due repentaunce, and ſo no luſt to herken vnto the Goſpell of gladde tydynges in Chriſtes bloude. And where the ryght waye is ſet before vs, ⁊ we of malyce wyll not walke therin, God can not but let the deuell play wyth vs, and iuggle our eyes to confirme vs in blyndneſſe.

How chriſt prayeth for vs.

But after what maner doth Chriſte pray for vs? Uerely Chriſt in the dayes of hys mortall fleſh ſuffred and prayed for al that ſhalbe ſaued, and optayned, and was herde, and had hys petitions graunted. And he made ſatiſfactiō, and purged, and purchaſſed forgeueneſſe, euen then for al the ſynnes that euer ſhalbe forgeuē: And his prayenge for vs, and beynge a mediatour nowe, is, that the remembraunce of all that he dyd for vs, is preſent in yͤ ſighte of god the father as freſh, as in the houre he dyd them, yee yͤ ſame houre is yet preſent and not paſt in the ſyghte of God.

And Chriſt is now a kyng and raygneth and hath receaued power of all that he prayed for, to do it hymſelfe, and yͭ when ſo euer the electe call for ought in his name, he ſendeth helpe euen of the power, which he hath receaued: yee yer they axe, he ſendeth his ſprete in to theyr hartes, to moue them to axe. So that it is his gyfte that we deſyre ought in his name. And in all that we do or thynke well, he preuenteth vs with his grace: yee he careth for vs yer we care for our ſelues, and when we be yet euel, he ſendeth to call vs, and draweth vs with ſuche power, that oure hartes can not but conſente and come.

And the angels ſtande by and behold the teſtament of the electe, how we ſhalbe receaued into theyr fellowſhip, and ſe all yͤ grace that Chriſt ſhall poure out vpō vs. And they reioyce and prayſe God for his infinite mercy, and are glad and lōge for vs, and of very loue are ready agaynſt all houres when we ſhall call for helpe in Chriſtes name, to come and helpe. And Chriſt ſendeth them when we call in his name, and yet we call, euen whyle we be yet euel & happely perſecut yͤ truth of ignoraũce (as Paul dyd) the angels wayte vpõ vs to kepe yͭ the deuels ſlaye vs not, before the tyme of our callynge be come.

Now yf an angell ſhulde appeare vnto the, what woldeſt thou ſaye vnto him? Yf thou praydeſt hym to helpe, he wolde anſwere: I do. Chriſte hath ſent me to helpe yͤ, and beleue that yͤ angels be euer aboute yͤ to helpe. Yf thou deſyredeſt him to praye for the to optayne this or that, he wolde ſaye: Chriſt hath prayed, & hys prayer is herde, or what ſo euer thou areſt in his name, he wyl ſhewe the al that God wolde do to the, and what he wolde alſo haue the to do. And yf thou beleuedeſt ſo, then wereſt thou ſafe. Yf thou deſyredeſt hym to ſaue the with hys merytes. he wolde anſwere that he had no merytes (but yͤ Chriſt only is LORDE of all merytes) nor ſaluacyon, but yͤ Chriſt is LORDE of ſaluacion. Wylte yͧ therfore be ſaued by merytes wold the angel ſaye, then praye to God in Chriſtes name, and thou ſhalte be ſaued by the merytes of hym, and haue me or ſome other thy ſeruaunte immediatlye to helpe the vnto the vttermooſt of our power, and to kepe the, and brynge the vnto the rewarde of hys merytes. Yf thou woldeſt promyſe hym to worſhyppe hym wyth ymage ſeruyce: that is to ſtycke vp a candle before hys ymage, or ſuche an ymage as he appeared to the in, he wolde anſwere that he were a ſprete, and delyted in no candle lyghte, but wold byd the geue a candle vnto thy neghboure that lacketh, yf thou haddeſt to many.

And ſo wolde he anſwere the, yf thou woldeſt put mony in a boxe for hym, or clothe hys ymage in clothe of golde, or put goldē ſhues vpon his ymages foote. Yf thou ſaydeſt that thou woldeſt buylde a chappel in his name, he wolde anſwere that he dwelt in no houſe made wyth ſtones, but wolde byd the go to the churches that are made already, and learne of the preacher there howe to beleue, and howe to lyue, and honoure God in the ſprete, for the whyche cauſe churches were cheſelye buylded, and for quyetneſſe to praye. And yf ther be no church, then to geue of it that thou mayeſt ſpare to helpe that one were buylded, to be a preachynge, and a prayenge houſe, and of worſhyppyng God in ſprete, and not of ymage ſeruyce.

And yf Paule appeared vnto the, what other thynge coulde he anſwere alſo then that he were a ſprete, and wolde refuſe all thy ymage ſeruyce? And yf thou ſpeake to Paule of hys merytes, he can none otherwyſe anſwere the, then he anſwered his Corinthians, that he dyed for no mans ſynnes, & that no man was baptyſed in his name, to truſt in hys merites. He wolde ſaye, I buylded all men vpon Chriſtes merytes, preachyng that all that repented and beleued in hys name, ſhulde be ſaued, and taken from vnder the wrath, vengeaunce, and damnacion of the lawe, and be put vnder mercy and grace. And by thys faythe was I ſaued from damnacion, and put vnder mercy and grace and made one wyth Chriſte to haue my parte wyth hym, and he wyth me, or rather to make a chaunge: that he ſhulde haue all my ſynnes, and I his mercy & the gyftes of his grace, and become glorious wyth yͤ ornamentes of his ryches. And of my ſaueoure Chriſt I receaued this lawe, that I ſhulde loue my brethren, all Gods electe as tenderly as he loued them. And I conſented vnto thys lawe, for it ſemed ryghte, and became a ſcoler to learne it. And as I profyted in the knowlege, fayth and loue of Chriſt, ſo I grewe in the loue of my brethren, and ſuffred all thynges for theyr ſakes, and at yͤ laſt waxed ſo perfecte, that I wyſhed myſelfe damned (yf it myghte haue ben) to ſaue my brethren. And all my brethren that receaued Chriſt receaued theſame commaundement, and grewe therin. And they that were perfect loued me and all theyr other brethren, no leſſe then I loued them. And loke wᵗ what loue I miniſtred yͤ gyftes of grace whych I receaued of Chriſt for the edifyenge of his congregacion, vpon my brethrẽ, wyth theſame loue dyd they miniſtre theyr gyftes agayne on me, whiche they had, and I lacked. And ſo loue made all commune.

And moreouer yf they call my workes my merytes, I beſtowed all my workes vpon my brethren to teach them, & reaped the frute therof, euen my brethrens edifyenge and ſoules health, yee & reape dayly, in that I lefte my doctrine and enſample of lyuynge behynde me, by the whych many are conuerted vnto Chriſt daylye. Yf thou deſyre therfore to enioye parte of my merytes, go and reade in my goſpel, and thou ſhalt fynde the frute of my laboure, the knowlege of Chriſt, yͤ health of thy ſoule, and euerlaſtynge lyfe.

And as I loued my brethren whẽ I lyued, ſo I loue them ſtyll, and nowe more perfectly. How be it my loue then was paynfull: for the more I loued, the more I ſorowed, feared, and cared for them, to brynge them in to the knowlege of the truth, and to kepe them in vnite of fayth, leſt the falſe Prophetes ſhulde deceaue them, or theyr owne infirmytyes ſhulde breake peace and vnite, or cauſe them to fall into ony ſynne.

But now my loue is without payne. For I ſe the wyl and prouidence of God, and howe the ende of all thynges ſhalbe vnto his glory and profyte of the electe. And though I ſe the electe ſhall ſomtyme fall, yet I ſe how they ſhall aryſe agayne, and how that theyr fall ſhalbe vnto yͤ glorye of God & theyr owne profyte. And we that are in heauen, loue you all alyke nother loue we one more & another leſſe. And therfore yf ye loue vs more one thẽ another, that is fleſhly, as myne olde Corinthians once loued, and I rebuked thẽ. Nother can we be moued to come more to helpe one then another. But we wayt when God wyl ſende ony of vs vnto the electe that call for helpe in Chriſtes name. Wherfore yf thou wylte be holpē of ony of vs, praye in Chriſtes name, and God ſhall ſende one of vs, an angell or a ſaynt, to kepe the power of the deuels from you: but not whome thou woldeſt choſe, temptynge God, but whome it pleaſeth God to ſende.

And yf youre preachers loue you not after theſame maner, to edyfye you with the true doctrine of Chriſte, and enſample of lyuynge ther after, and to kepe you in vnytye of fayth & charite, they be not of Chriſtes diſciples, but Antichriſt, which vnder the name of Chriſte, ſeke to raygne ouer you as temporal tyrāntes. And in lyke maner: Yf thys be not wryttē in your hartes ỹ ye ought to loue one another as Chriſte loued you, and as ye had enſample of vs his Apoſtles, ye go aſtray in vanities and are not in the ryght waye.

And therby are vve ſure that vve knovve hym, yf vve kepe his commaūdementes.

The ſtate of grace.

This is cleane agaynſt the doctryne of them which ſaye that we can not know whether we be in the ſtate of grace or no. Jhon ſayeth yf we kepe hys commaundementes, then we be ſure that we knowe

Chriſte is euerlaſtyng lyfe Jhō.xvii. The contrarye to the byſhop of Ro. Chriſten men haue doctrine to know whether they be in grace or no.

The kepyng of Gods cōmaundemētes certifieth vs ẏ we be in the ſtate of grace But the phariſaycall doctours haue no doctryne to knowe when a man is in the ſtate of grace, wherfore it is manyfeſte ẏ they kepe not Gods commaundementes, nor be in ſtate of grace, but of all vngraciouſneſſe.

Nother know ſuch doctours whether they be in ſtate of grace, but kepe mens commaundementes, ergo mens cōmaundementes certifye not that we be in ſtate of grace. Thoughe thou haue a deuotion to ſtyck vp a candle before a poſte, and ſo forth, yet thou canſt neuer be ſure therby that thou arte in the fauoure of God. But yf thou haue deuotion to helpe thy brother in all hys myſfortunes, becauſe he is ẏ ymage of God, and price of Chriſtes bloude, then thy deuotion certifyeth the, that thou arte in the fauoure of God or ſtate of grace.

He that ſayeth I knovv hym, & yet kepeth not his cōmaundementes, is a lyer and the truth is not in hym.

Whan oure phariſes ſaye, do as we byd you, and not as we do, they teſtifye that they kepe not Gods commaundemētes, vnto whych teſtimony oure eyes alſo beare recorde, ⁊ they that kepe not Gods cōmaundementes be lyars, and haue no truth in them. And thā whan they preach, they can not but preach lyes. And than though they preache Chriſte, they preach hym falſly vnto theyr fleſhly vauntage, ⁊ not our ſoules health. And for as muche as we maye haue no fellowſhip wyth thē that kepe not Gods commaūdementes, i.Cor.v. and in as muche as all ſuche are falſe prophetes, voyde of all truth, it followeth that we ought to geue oure doctors no audience, though theyr defēders ſtode by them wyth theyr ſweardes drawen, but rather to laye downe our heades and ſtretch forth oure neckes, to be ſlayne.

A ſure argumēt to knowe fals prophetes by.

He that kepeth hys vvorde, in him verely is the loue of God perfecte: and hereby knovv vve that vve are in him.

That is, he that kepeth hys cōmaundementes, loueth vnfaynedly, and is therby ſure that he is in God. For to be in God, is to beleue in the mercy of God. And to beleue in mercy, is cauſe of loue, and loue cauſe of workynge. And therfore he that worketh for Gods ſake, is ſure that he loueth, and that he truſteth in God: whych is to be in God or Chriſt. And as by wylfull keppynge of the commaundement we be ſure that we loue God, and beleue in God, euen ſo thorow wylfull breakynge of them we maye be ſure that we nother loue nor beleue in hym, and therfore that we be not in hym.

A rule to knowe whether we loue God or loue hym not.

He that ſayeth he abydeth in him, ought to vvalke as he vvalked.

All that be baptyſed in Chriſte, are waſhē in hym, to put of pryde, wrath, hate and enuye, wyth all theyr olde conuerſacion: by the whyche they oppreſſed theyr neghbours, and haue promyſed to become euery man euen as Chriſte hymſelfe vnto his brethren in loue and kyndneſſe, both in worde and dede. They therfore which reſyſte Chriſtes teſtamente, and wyll not let it be knowen, and walke in the teſtamente of Antichriſte of Rome, wyth vnions, pluralities, and tot quots, ſome one of them, robbynge ten paryſhes of yͤ tenth of all theyr yearely increaſe, and wythdrawynge from them Gods worde, the foode of theyr ſoules, and from the poore, theyr dayly ſuſtenaunce, whych oughte to haue theyr parte in the tythes and other rentes,

Loke vpon the B. Romane decrees Cauſa xii. queſt. ii. and other places.

whan the preacher and other neceſſary miniſters haue oute theyr partes, a due and lawfull ſtipende : are not in Chriſte. For Chriſt nother ſo walked, nor taught.

Brethren I vvryte no nevv cōmaū maundement vnto you, but an olde cōmaundement, vvhych ye had at the begynnynge. For an olde cōmaūdement is the vvorde, vvhych ye herde frō the begynnynge.

I wryte no new precepte, but onely put you in remembraunce of that olde, whyche was taughte you whan ye were fyrſte baptyſed in Chriſte, to loue eche other, as he dyd you. Whyche is an olde commaundemente, and was geuen at the begynnynge of the worlde, and hath euer ſence bene wrytten in the harte of all that put theyr hope in God.

Agayne, a nevv commaundement I vvryte vnto you, vvhyche is true in hym, and alſo in you: for the darkeneſſe is paſt, and the true lyght novve ſhyneth.

The deuell hath ſowen hys darkneſſe in the felde, where thys commaundement ſhulde growe, & the wedes of mēs tradicions had ouergrowen ẏ corne of thys olde cōmaūdemēt: ſo that it was waxe olde, &

clene out of knowlege. But Chriſte the lyght of all true doctrine nowe ſhyneth, & hath ſcattered the darkneſſe, and plucked vp the wedes by the rootes, and reſtored thys olde commaundement agayne. And in hym it is a true commaundement, for he loued truely. And in you it is a true cōmaundement, for ye for hys ſake loue one another truely alſo. And by the reaſon of thys renewynge, it is called a newe commaundement, as it is nowe called newe learnynge, and may well ſo be: for it hath lyen longe in darkneſſe, and that in ſuche darkneſſe, that many be ſhryned for holye ſayntes, whoſe dedes and lyuynge when thou lokeſt vpon them, conferryng them to the lyghte of thys olde doctrine ỹ nowe ſhyneth agayne out of darkneſſe, they are abomynable blaſphemyes to Gods doctrine, ỹ which they haue ſworne to teach and followe.

He that ſayth he is in the lyght, & yet hateth hys brother, is in darkneſſe.

For who ſo euer feleth hys owne damnation vnder the lawe, & beleueth in the mercie that is in Chriſt, the ſame can not but loue Chriſt, and hys neghbour for his ſake. And therfore he that hateth hys brother for ony offence done to hym, the ſame ſeyth not what Chriſt hath done for hym, but is in darkneſſe ſtyll.

He that loueth hys brother abydeth in the lyght: and ther is none offẽdyng in hym.

Abydeth in the lyght, that is, continueth in the knowlege of Chriſt. And ther is none offendynge in hym, that is: Fyrſt he wyll wyllyngly do nothynge, ether in worde or in dede that ſhall offẽde his brother. For loue wyll not let hym. And ſecõdarely, yf ought be done or ſayd, that may be well done or ſayde, he taketh it to the beſt, and is not offended. And thus ye ſe that the knowlege of Chriſt is cauſe of al goodneſſe, and the ignoraunce of Chriſt is cauſe of all euell. And ſo the doctrine of them is not falſe, whyche ſaye, that fayth in Chriſte is the roote of all godly vertue, and the cauſe of kepynge the commaũdemẽtes: & where faith is, there to be no ſynne, nor dãnacion: and that ſay, vnbelefe to be the mother of al vyce, & cauſe of breakynge the cõmaundementes, and to kepe men in ſynne and dãnacion only, as fayth only louſeth vs thence.

And he that hateth hys brother, is in darkeneſſe, and vvalketh in darkeneſſe, & knovveth not vvhether he go eth: for darknes hath blynded his eyes

He that hateth hys brother, is in the ignoraunce of Chriſte, and of hys owne ſynne, and wythout repentaunce & fayth, that hys ſynnes be forgeuẽ him in Chriſt, and therfore is mercyleſſe vnto hys brother, whom Chriſt commaundeth hym to pytie and loue. And in that ignoraunce he walketh: that is, worketh euell, and loueth the thynges of the world, and ſeketh in the the luſtes of the fleſh, whych are the quenchynge of the ſprete and death of the ſoule and for loue of them hateth hys brother. And thys ignoraunce of Chriſte, whyche is vnbelefe, is cauſe of all the wyckedneſſe that we do vnto our brethren.

I vvryte vnto yon lytle chyldren that your ſynnes are forgeuen you for hys names ſake. I vvryte vnto you fathers, that ye knovv hym that vvas frõ the begynnynge. I vvryte vnto you yonge men, hovv that ye haue ouercome the vvycked.

I wryte vnto you that are yonge in the fayth and yet weake, and therfore fall now and than, how that youre ſynnes are forgeuen you, as ſoone as ye repent and reconcyle youre ſelues vnto youre brethren, whom ye haue offẽded, euẽ for hys names ſake only, and not for our owne dedes, whether afore or after, or for ony other mans dedes or ſatiſfaccion, ſaue for hys only.

I wryte vnto you that are fathers in the doctrine of God, to teach other, how that ye knowe hym that was from the begynnyng, and is no newe thynge, though he newly receaued oure nature. And thorowe knowlege of hym (whych is the only lyght and the dore vnto the knowlege of God) ye are become fathers in the ſcriptures, or els ye had neuer vnderſtande it, though ye had ſtudyed neuer ſo muche, as it appeareth by the indurate Jewes, and alſo by oure new phariſes, whyche perſecute the ſcripture and the true ſence therof, becauſe they be drowned in the ignoraunce of Chriſt, as theyr dedes and contrarye lyuynge well teſtifye.

I wryte vnto you yonge men that are ſtronge in ſufferyng perſecucions, & fyght for youre profeſſion, not wyth the ſweard, but with ſufferyng, how that ye haue ouercome that wycked, whyche poyſonned the worlde at the begynnyng, and yet worketh in the chyldren of darkneſſe and vnbelefe: and that in beleuynge the worde of truth, as it followeth anone after.

I vvryte vnto you yonge chyldrē

how

hovv that ye knovve the father. I vvryte vnto you fathers hovv that ye knovve hym that vvas from the begynnynge. I vvryte vnto you yonge men that ye be ſtronge, and the vvord of God dvvelleth in you, and that ye haue ouercome the vvycked.

I wryte to you yonge chyldren howe that ye knowe the father, whome ye loue thorowe knowlege of the ſonne, or els ye had neuer knowen hym as a father, but as a iudge & a tyraũt, and had hated him. I wryte vnto you fathers as before, how ye are fathers of al truth in knowyng the ſonne, or els ye hadde euer continued in darkneſſe remedyleſſe.

I wryte vnto you yonge men, howe that ye are ſtronge, and that your ſtrẽgth is the worde of God whyche dwelleth in your breſtes thorow fayth, in the whyche ye haue ouercome the wycked deuell and all hys pompe, as it followeth in the .v. Chap. thys is the victory that ouercommeth the worlde, euen our fayth.

Loue not the vvorlde, nor the thinges that are in the vvorlde. Yf a man loue the vvorld, the loue of the father is not in hym. For all that is in the vvorld, as the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, and the pryde of good, are not of the father but are of the vvorld: and the vvorlde vanyſheth avvaye, & the luſte therof. But he that doeth the vvyll of God, abydeth euer.

Auarice or couetouſneſſe.

The loue of the worlde quencheth the loue of God. Balaam for the loue of the worlde cloſed hys eyes at the cleare lyghte which he well ſawe. For loue of the world the old phariſes blaſphemed the holy gooſt and perſecuted the manyfeſte truth, which they coulde not improue. For loue of the worlde many are thys daye fallen awaye. And many which ſtode on the truths ſyde and defended it a whyle for loue of the worlde, haue gotten them vnto the contrarye parte, and are become the Antichriſtes of Romes mamelukes, and are waxen the mooſte wycked enemyes vnto the truthe and mooſt cruell agaynſt it. They knowe the truth, but they loue the worlde. And when they eſpyed that the truth could not ſtond with yͤ honoures which they ſought in the worlde, they hated it deadly & bothe wyttynge and wyllynge perſecuted it, ſynnynge agaynſte the holy gooſte. Whyche ſynne ſhall not eſcape here vnpunyſhed, as it ſhall not be wythout damnation in the world to come, but ſhall haue an ende here with confuſion and ſhame, as had Judas Iſcarioth the traytoure.

The luſt of the fleſhe & of the eyes.

By the luſt of the fleſhe is vnderſtand lechery, which maketh a man altogether a ſwyne: and by the luſt of the eyes, is vnderſtonde couetouſneſſe, whiche is the roote of al euel, and maketh to erre from the fayth. i. Timoth. the laſt. And then foloweth pryde: which. iii. are the world and capitaynes ouer all other vices, and occaſions of all myſchefe.

And yf pryde, couetouſneſſe, & lechery be the worlde as ſaynt Jhon ſayeth, then turne youre eyes vnto the ſpiritualty, vnto the Romane byſhop, Cardinals, byſſhops, abbates, and al other prelates, and ſe whether ſuch dignityes be not yͤ world, and whether the way to them be not alſo the worlde. To get the olde Abbats treaſure, I thynke it the redyeſt waye to be yͤ newe. Howe fewe come by promotion, except they bye it, or ſerue longe for it, or both? To be ſkylled in warre and in pollynge, to mayntayn warre and luſtes: and to be a good ambaſſyadoure, is the only waye to a byſſhopryke, or to paye truely for it. Se whether pluralyties, vnions, tot quots, and chaungynge the leſſe benefyce and byſſhopryke for the greater (for the contrarye chaunge I trowe was neuer ſene) maye be without couetouſneſſe and pryde. And then yf ſuche thynges be the worlde, and the worlde not of God, howe is oure ſpiritualtye of God? Yf pryde be ſekyng of glorye, and they that ſeke glorye can not beleue Ihon .v. howe can oure ſpiritualtye beleue in Chriſte? Yf couetouſneſſe turne men from the faycth, how are oure ſpiritualtye in the faythe? Yf Chriſt (when the deuel proferred hym the kyngdomes of the worlde and the glorye therof) refuſed them as thynges vnpoſſible to ſtande wyth hys kyngdome, whiche is not of yͤ world: of whome are oure ſpiritualtye, which haue receaued them? Yf couetouſneſſe be a traytoure, and taught Iudas to ſell hys Maſter: howe ſhulde he not in ſo longe tyme teache oure ſpiritualtye the ſame crafte? Namelye, when they be of all kynges ſecretes, and the ambaſſiadours of theyr ſecretes, and haue therto thorowt all Chriſtendome a ſecret counſell of theyr owne, of the whiche neuer laye man was partaker, and wyth the which they turne the ende of all appoyntementes vnto theyr owne honoure and profyte. Couetouſneſſe hath taughte thẽ

Couetouſneſſe.

to brynge in damnable ſectes accordyng vnto the prophecye of Peter, and to corruppe the ſcripture with falſe gloſes, and to turne euery good ordinaunce that had a vertuous begynnynge vnto a vycyous ende. The promotions of the ſpiritualtye corrupte theyr myndes, whyle they be yet in the ſhell and vnhatched. For they come thyther but for couetouſneſſe, and to auoyde the croſſe of Chriſte in the worlde: except thē that be compelled of theyr frēdes, or be ſo ſymple that they marke not theyr falſhed beforhande. Who knowyng the truth & louyng it, wold put his heade in ẏ Romyſh byſhops haltre that ſo moſeleth mens mouthes, that they cā not opē them to defende ony truthe at all? When temporall kynges were in theyr hygh authorite, then the generall councell repreſſed the enormytes of ẏ ſpiritualtye. But ſence the Antichriſte of Rome, cardinals, and byſhopes were exlated, and the Emproure and kynges became theyr ſeruauntes, they wolde ſuffre nought to be determyned in theyr councelles that ſhulde reforme the worlde of theyr deuellyſh pryde, inſaciable couetouſneſſe, and ſtynkynge lecherye, which may ſtonde with no godlye vertue. But ẏ worlde which is not of

God, ſhall at the laſt haue an ende with cōfuſion, and they onlye abyde, ẏ do the wyll of the father: whych wyll is that we beleue in the ſonne, and loue one another. Let thē therfore that haue the worldes good (I myght ſaye the worldes god) vſe it, but not loue it, that they maye be ready to beſtow it at the pleaſure of God. And let them which haue it not, deſyre it not: for it blyndeth the eyes of the ſeynge. Deu. xvii. But let them put theyr truſt in God, whyche ſhall not fayle them, nor leaue them deſtitute of rayment and foode, whych Paule counſelleth to be content wyth. The rych (as James ſayeth) perſecute the true beleuers. The ryche wyll neuer ſtonde forth openly for the worde of God. Yf of. x. thou fande ther ſprynge one Nicodemus, it is a greate thynge.

Lytle chyldrē it is novv the laſt hour and as ye haue herde that Anthichriſt ſhulde come, euē ſo novv are many Antichriſtes come already. Vvhereby vve knovv, that it is the laſt houre. They vvent out of vs, but vvere none of vs. For had they bene of vs, they had continued vvith vs. But that fortuned that it myghte appeare hovve they vvere not all of vs.

What the laſt houre is.

Houre is here taken for tyme. The laſt houre is as much to ſaye, as the laſt tyme. Though the Apoſtles myghte not knowe when the laſt daye ſhall be, and how longe the worlde ſhulde endure, yet thys was ſhewed them, and vs by them, that Antichriſt ſhuld fyrſt come: and not only come but alſo preuayle and be receaued after a worldly maner and raygne ouer all, & ſet vp a longe cõtinuynge kyngdome with dãnable ſectes & wonderfull kyndes of ypocriſye, that is to ſaye, falſhed cloked vnder a contrarye pretence, as teſtifyeth Paule and alſo Peter. Which Antichriſt begãne with the Apoſtles, & dyd ſow his doctrine amonge the doctrine of the Apoſtles, preachynge many thynges as the Apoſtles dyd, and addynge euer ſomwhat of his owne, ẏ the wedes myghte euer grow vp together wͭ the corne. Of the which Jhon gathered a ſygne, ẏ the laſt daye drewe nye, though he could not be ſure how longe it were therto.

Antichriſt.

Antichriſt is one of the fyrſte that ſeyth the lyghte, and cõmeth & preacheth Chriſte a whyle and ſeketh hys glorye in Chriſtes Goſpell. But whan he eſpyeth that ther wyll no glorye cleue vnto that preachyng, then he getteth hym to the cõtrarye parte, and profeſſeth hymſelfe an open enemy, yf he can not diſgyſe hymſelfe, and hyde yͤ angle of his poyſoned hereſye vnder a bayte of true doctrine.

The Apoſtles were cleare eyed, and eſpyed Antichriſt at once, and put hym to flyght, & wedes out hys doctrine quyckly. But whan charite wexed colde, and the preachers beganne to ſeke themſelues, and to admytte glorye and honoure of ryches, then Antichriſt diſgyſed hymſelfe after the faſhiō of a true Apoſtle, & preached Chriſt wylyly, bryngyng in now thys tradicion, and nowe that, to darken the doctrine of Chriſte, and ſet vp innumerable ceremonyes, ſacramentes and ymagery, geuynge them ſygnifycacions at the fyrſte: but at the laſte the ſygnifycacions layed aparte, preached the worke as an holy dede, to iuſtifye and to put awaye ſynne, and to ſaue the ſoule, that men ſhulde put theyr truſte in workes and in what ſo euer was vnto hys glory and profyte, and vnder yͤ name of Chriſt, muſtered Chriſte out of altogether, and became heade of the congregacion hymſelfe.

The byſhop of Rome made a lawe of his owne to rule his church by, and put Chriſtes out of the waye. All the byſhoppes ſweare vnto the byſhoppe of Rome, and all curates vnto the byſhoppes, but all forſweare Chriſt and hys doctrine.

But ſeynge Jhon toke a ſygne of the laſt daye, that he ſawe Antichriſt begyn, how nye oughte we to thynke that it is, which after .viii. hūdreth yeares raygnyng in proſperite, ſe it decaye agayne, and his falſhed to be diſcloſed, & hym to be ſlayne with the ſprete of the mouth of Chriſte, that is, with that olde doctrine that proceded out of Chriſtes mouth: For Paule ſayeth: when Antichriſte is vttered, then commeth the ende.

But ye haue the anoyntynge of that holy, and knovve all thynge. I vvryte not vnto you as thoughe ye knevve not the truthe, but as vnto them that knovve it, and hovve that no lye is of the truthe.

The holy.

Chriſt in the ſcripture is called yͤ holy, becauſe he onely ſanctifyeth and halloweth vs. And he is called Chriſt: that is to ſaye, anoynted, becauſe he anoynteth oure ſoules with the holy gooſt, and with all the gyftes of the ſame.

Anoynted.

Ye are not anoynted wͭ oyle in your bodyes, but with the ſprete of Chriſt in your ſoules: which ſprete teacheth you all truth in Chriſt, & maketh you to iudge what is a lye, and what truth, and to knowe Chriſte from Antichriſt. For excepte he taught your ſoules within, the pourynge in of wordes at youre eares were in vayne.

For they muſt al be taught of God. Jo. vi. And the thynges of God noman knoweth, ſaue the ſprete of God: and the carnal man knoweth not the thynges of the ſprete of God, whan contrary, the ſpiritual that is anoynted with the ſprete, iudgeth all thynges. i. Cor. ii. And therfore we are forbydden to call vs ony mayſter vpon earth. Math. xxiii. ſeynge we haue all one mayſter now in heauē, which only teacheth vs with his ſprete, though by the admyniſtracyon and office of a faythful preacher. Which preacher yet can not make his preachynge ſprynge in ẏ harte, nomore thē a ſower can make hys corne growe, nor can ſaye this mā ſhal receaue the worde, and this not: but ſoweth the worde only, and commytteth ẏ growyng to God, whoſe ſprete breatheth where he lyſteth, and maketh the grounde of whoſe harte he lyſteth frutfull, & choſeth whom he wyl at his own pleaſure, and for none other cauſe knowen vnto ony man.

Vvho is a lyare, but he that denyeth that IESVS is CHRISTE?

The ſame is Antichriſt, that denyeth the father and the ſonne.

For as much as Antichriſt & Chriſt are two contraries, and the ſtudye of Antichriſt is to quenche the name of Chriſt, how can the Romyſh byſhop and hys ſectes be Antichriſt, whan they all preache Chriſte? How was (ſaye I agayne to the) Pelagius, whoſe doctrine the Byſhop of Rome defendeth in the hygheſt degre Antichriſt, and all other heretikes alſo? Verely for the byſhop of Rome ſeketh hymſelfe as al heretykes dyd, and abuſeth the name of Chriſt, to gather the offerynges, tythes and rentes in hys name, to beſtowe them vnto hys owne honour and not Chriſtes, and to brynge the conſcience of the people into captiuite vnder hym, thorowe ſuperſticious feare, as thoughe he had ſuche authorite geuen hym of Chriſte. And euery ſyllable that hath a ſounde as thoughe it made for hys purpoſe, that he expoundeth falſly and fleſhly, and therwyth iugleth and bewytcheth he the eares of the people, and maketh them his owne poſſeſſion, to beleue what hym lyſteth, as though it made no matter to them whether he preached true or falſe, ſo farre as they beleue & do as he byddeth them. But all the textes that ſhewe hym to do hys duety, he puteth out of the waye, and all the textes therto that ſet the cõſciences at lyberte in Chriſt and proue oure ſaluacion to be in Chriſte onely. And wyth Pelagius he preacheth the iuſtifienge of workes, whych is the denyenge of Chriſte. He preacheth a falſe byndynge and louſynge wyth eare confeſſion, whyche is not in the truſte and cõfidence of Chriſtes bloudſheddynge. He preacheth the falſe penaunce of dedes, not to tame the fleſhe, that we ſynne nomore, but to make ſatiſfaccion and to redeme yͤ ſynne that is paſt. Whyche what other can it be ſaue the denyenge of Chriſte, whyche is onely redempcion of ſynne? He maketh of the workes, of the ceremonies, (whych were wont to be ſygnes and remēbraunce of thynges to be beleued or done) ymage ſeruice vnto God and his ſayntes, whyche are ſpretes, to purchaſe wyth the merytes of thē what ſo euer yͤ blynde ſoule ymagineth: whych all are the denyenge of Chriſt. For yf thou wylt receaue ony anoyntynge of grace or mercy ony whence ſaue of hym, he is no longer Chriſt vnto the. Chriſt is called Jeſus, a ſauioure: he is called Chriſtus, kynge anoynted ouer all men, of whom they muſt holde, & of whoſe

The B. of R. and Pelagius agre

Jeſus. Chriſtus.

bene

Emanuel.

Sanctus.

benefyte muſte all they haue. He is called Emanuel, God is wyth vs. For he onely maketh God our God, our ſtrength, power, ſwearde and ſhylde, and ſhortlye oure father. He is called Sanctus, that is, holy that halloweth, ſanctifyeth, and bleſſeth all nacions. And theſe be hys names for euer, and be no names of ypocriſye, as we ſometyme call hym Thomas Curteſye, whych is but a churle: and as we cal them curates, whych care for theyr paryſhes as the wolfe for the flocke: and them byſhoppes, that is ouerſeers, whyche wyl ſo ouerſe, that they wyll ſuffre nought to be proſperous ſaue theyr owne cõmune welth: and as ſome call themſelues deade, which lyue in all voluptuouſneſſe: and as ſome call themſelues poore wythout hauynge ony thynge proper, and yet lyue in all abundaunce: and as they ſhaue and diſgyſe themſelues wyth garmentes and ornamẽtes to ſignifye euer a contrary thynge thã that they be.

Deade men

Poore men

Naye Chriſt is no ypocrite or diſgyſed, that playeth a parte in a playe and preſenteth a perſone or ſtate whych he is not: But is alway that hys name ſygnifyeth. He is euer a Saueour and oure anoynted wyth grace, and euer maketh God wyth vs, and euer ſanctifyeth. Nother is ther ony other to ſaue & ſanctifye frō ſynne, or anoynte wyth grace, or to ſet God at one wyth men. And theſe thynges whych hys name ſignifye, doth he euer vnto al that haue truſt & confidence in hys bloude, as ſoone as they repente of the ſynne, whyche they deſyre to be ſaued and ſanctifyed from

Now though the Byſhop of Rome & hys ſectes geue Chriſte theſe names, yet in that they robbe hym of the effectes, & take the ſignificacions of hys names vnto thēſelues, and make of hym but an ypocrite, as they themſelues be, they be the right Antichriſtes, and denye both the father & ſōne For they denye the wytneſſe that the father bare vnto hys ſonne and depryue the ſonne of all the power and glorye that hys father gaue hym.

Vvho ſo euer denyeth the ſonne, the ſame hath not the father.

For noman knoweth the father but the ſonne and to whome the ſonne ſheweth hym. Math. xi. Moreouer yf thou knowe not the mercy that God hath ſhewed the in Chriſte, thou canſt not knowe hym as a father. Thou mayeſt well beſyde Chriſt knowe hym as a tyraūt. And thou mayeſt knowe hym by hys workes, as the olde

Philoſophers dyd, that ther is a God, but thou canſt nother beleue in hys mercy, nor loue hys lawes, (whyche is hys only worſhip in the ſprete,) ſaue by Chriſt.

Let therfore abyde in you that vvhych ye herde at the begynnynge. Yf that, vvhych ye herde at the begynnyng ſhal remayne in you, thã ſhal ye continue in the ſonne & in the father. And thys is the promyſe that he hath promyſed vs, euerlaſtynge lyfe.

The Apoſtles doctrin ought we to abyde by

Yf we abyde in the olde doctrine, which the Apoſtles taught, and herke to no newe learnynge: than abyde we in the ſonne (for vpon the ſonne buylde they vs) and in the father thorowe confidence in the ſonne, & are heyres of euerlaſtynge lyfe.

Theſe thynges haue I vvryttẽ vnto you, becauſe of them that deceaue you. And the anoyntynge that ye receaued of hym dvvelleth in you, and ye nede not that ony man teach you, but as that anoyntynge teacheth you of all thynges, and is true, and is no lye. Euen as it hath taught you ſo abyde therin.

Whan a true preacher preacheth, the ſprete entreth the hartes of the electe, and maketh them fele the ryghteouſneſſe of the lawe of God, and by the lawe the poyſon of their corrupt nature, ⁊ thēce leadeth thē thorowe repentaunce, vnto the mercye that is in Chriſtes bloud. And as an oyntment healeth the bodye, euen ſo the ſprete, thorow confidence and truſt in Chriſtes bloude, healeth the ſoule, and maketh her loue the law of God, and therfore is it called anoyntyng or oyntmēt, and may wel be ſygnifyeth by the oyle of our ſacramēt. But outwarde oyle can nother heale the ſoule nor make her fele, ſaue as a ſygne, or as a buſhe at a tauerne dore quencheth a mans thyrſte, nother is it a thynge to put truſte in, let vs therfore followe the teachynge of the ſprete, whych we haue receaued (as Paule ſayeth) in earneſte to certifye oure hartes ⁊ to make vs fele the thynges of God, ⁊ not cleue vnto the traditions of men, in the whych is no felyng, but yͤ one ſayeth ſo ⁊ another thus, confyrmynge theyr aſſercions wͭ glorious perſuaſions of wyſedome, but not after yͤ wyſedō of God. Whych reaſons another denyeth with contrary ſophiſmes: ⁊ ſo ryſeth brawlynge about vayne wordes wͭout certente.

Anoyntyng

And novv lytle chyldren abyde in hym, that vvhan he ſhal appeare, vve may haue confidence, & not be made

aſha

aſhamed of hym at hys cōmynge.

Here are two thynges to be marked: one yf we cleue vnto Chriſt after the doctrine of the Apoſtles and as they buylt vs vpon hym, we ſhalbe bolde and ſure of our ſelues at hys cōmyng, as a ſeruaūt, which in hys mayſters abſence doeth onely hys mayſters commaundementes, can not be confoūded at hys cōmynge home agayne. But and yf we followe mēs doctrine, how can we be bolde? yee how ſhulde we not be aſhamed wyth our teachers? vnto whom he ſhall than ſaye (whan they boaſt themſelues, how that they haue bene hys vycares) I knowe you not, departe from me ye that haue wrought wyckedneſſe, and vnder my name haue brought in damnable ſectes, and haue taught youre diſciples to beleue in other thynges than in me. Now the ſumme of al that the Apoſtles taught, and how they buylt vs vpon Chriſt, is the new teſtament. But the Byſhop of Romes doctrine is not there founded, but euē improued. Confounded therfore ſhal he be whyche wyttynge and wyllynge ſhutteth hys eyes at the true lyght, and openeth thē to beleue hys lyes.

Another thynge is thys, al ẏ ſcripture maketh mencion of the reſurreccion and

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commynge agayne of Chriſt: and that all men, both they that go before, and they that come after ſhall then receaue theyr rewardes together, and we are commaunded to loke euerye houre for that daye.

And what is done wyth the ſoules from the departynge of theyr bodyes vnto that daye, doth the ſcripture make no mentiō, ſaue only yͤ they reſt in the LORD and in theyr fayth. Wherfore he that determyneth ought of the ſtate of them that be departed, doth but teach the preſūptuouſe ymaginations of hys owne brayne: Nether can hys doctrine be ony artycle of our fayth. What God doth wyth them, is a ſecret, layed vp in the treaſury of God. And we ought to be pacient, beynge certifyed of the ſcripture, that they whiche dye in the fayth, are at reſt, and ought no more to ſearche that ſecrete, thē to ſearch the houre of the reſurrection, which God hath put only in hys owne power. But thys remēbre, that the whole natur of mā is poyſoned and infecte with ſynne: And the whole lyfe of ſinne muſt be mortified. Nowe the roote of all ſynne and firſt vice that we were infecte wyth, is, that we wold be wyſe, where God hath not taught vs, as ye ſe how Eue wolde haue bene as

God in knowlege of good and bad. And therfore hath God hyd many thynges in hys power, and commaunded that we ſhal search none of hys ſecretes farther, then he hath opened them in hys ſcrypture, to mortifye thys poyſon of all poyſons, ỷ deſyre to appeare wyſe, & that we be aſhamed to be ignoraūt in ony thynge at all. Wherfore they that vyolently make articles of ỷ fayth wythout Gods worde are yet alyue in the roote of ſynne, and vice, and growe out of the deuel, and not out of Chriſte. And theyr articles are of the blyndneſſe of the deuel, and not of the lyght of Chriſt: for Chriſtes lyghte hath teſtimonye of the ſcripture euery where.

Yf ye knovve that he is ryghteous, knovve that all that vvorke ryghteouſneſſe are borne of hym.

Oure nature is to worke wyckedneſſe and ſo blynde therto, that it cā ſe no righteouſneſſe. And then it followeth that we muſt be borne a newe in Chriſt, yer we be, or can ether do or yet know what is ryghteous. And in hym we muſt fyrſt be made ryghteous oure ſelues, yer we can worke ryghteous workes, whyche concluſion is contrarye vnto the B. of Rome. For he ſayeth that the workes do make the man ryghteous, and Chriſtes doctryne ſayeth: that the man maketh the workes ryghteous. A righteous mā ſpryngeth out of righteous workes ſayeth the B. of Romes doctrine, ryghteous workes ſprynge oute of a ryghteous man, & a ryghteous mā ſpryngeth out of Chriſt, ſayth Chriſtes doctrin. The workes make the man ryghteous that before was wycked ſayeth the B. of Rome, the workes declare that the man is ryghteous ſayeth Chriſtes doctrine, but yͤ man was fyrſt made ryghteous in Chriſt and the ſprite of Chriſte taught hym what ryghteouſneſſe was, and healed hys harte, and made hym conſent therto, and to haue hys luſte in ryghteouſneſſe, and to worke ryghteouſly.

¶ The.iii.Chapter.

BEhold vvhat loue the father hath ſhevved vs, that vve ſhuld be called the ſonnes of God. For thys cauſe the vvorlde knovveth you not, becauſe it knovveth not hym. Dearly beloued, novv vve are the ſons of god thoughe yet it appeareth not vvhat vve ſhalbe, but vve knovv that vvhā he ſhal appeare, vve ſhalbe lyke hym: for vve ſhall ſe hym as he is.

The loue of God to vs warde is excedynge grace, in that he hathe made vs hys ſonnes wythoute all deſeruynge of vs, and hath geuen vs hys ſprete thorowe Chriſte, to certifye oure hartes thereof, in that we fele that oure truſte is in God, & that oure ſoules haue receaued health and power to loue the lawe of God, whiche is a ſure teſtimonye that we are ſonnes and vnder no damnacion. Nother ought it to diſcorage vs, or to make vs thynke we were leſſe beloued, becauſe the worlde hateth vs, & perſecuteth vs, for the worlde knoweth vs not. Nother let any maruayle for the worlde coulde not knowe Chriſte hym ſelfe for all hys gloryous commynge wyth myracles and benefytes in healynge the ſycke and rayſynge the deade.

The worlde coulde not knowe Chriſte.

But for all the oppreſſion of the worlde we are yet ſure that we are Goddes ſonnes. And in lyke maner though the glorye that we ſhalbe in appeare not: yet we are ſure that we ſhalbe lyke hym, when he appearethe. As darkneſſe vanyſheth awaye at the cõmynge of the Sonne, & the worlde receaueth a newe faſhion, and it turneth into lyght, and is ſodenlye made glorious: Euen ſo when he appeareth, and we ſhall ſe hym as he is, we ſhall in the lyght of him

The world ſhal knowe Chriſte.

be chaunged into the glorye of his ymage and made lyke hym . And then ſhall the worlde know both hym and vs vnto theyr ſhame and confuſion.

And all that haue thys hope in hym purge themſelues , as he is pure.

The fayth and hope of a chriſten man, are no dead, ydle, or baren thynges : but lyuely, workynge and frutefull. For when the law thorowe conſcience of ſynne hath ſlayne the ſoule, then hope and truſte in Chriſtes bloude thorowe certifyenge of yͤ conſcience that yͤ damnacion of the lawe is taken awaye, quycken her agayne, and make her to loue the lawe, whiche is the purifyenge of the ſoule and hyr lyfe, and ſeruynge the lawe in the inner man. And then the ſayde gyftes of hope and faythe ſtretche themſelues forth vnto the membres, dead with natural luſt, conſent, and cuſtome to ſynne, and quicken them, and purge them, with the wholſome penaũce of Chriſtes doctrine, and make thẽ ſerue the lawe outwarde, and beare wholſome frute of loue, vnto the profyte of theyr neghbours, accordynge to Chriſtes loue vnto vs. For yf the ſprete of Chriſte (with the whiche God anoynteth vs, and

The faythe of a Chriſtẽ man.

maketh vs kynges, and ſealeth vs, and maketh vs hys ſure and ſeueral kyngdome whyche he geueth vs in earneſt.ii.Cor.i. and wyth the whyche he chaungeth vs in to the ymage of Chriſt.ii.Cor.iiii.) dwell in oure ſoules thorowe faythe, theſame ſprete can not but quycken the membres alſo, and make them frutefull. Roma.viii. Wherfore the faythe and hope of the Romane byſhop, whych by theyr owne cõfeſſion maye ſtande wyth all wyckedneſſe, and conſent vnto all euel, and be wythout repentaunce towarde Gods lawe (as it appeareth by theyr thre capitall ſynnes, touched of Jhon a lytle aboue: pryde, couetouſneſſe and lechery) are no true faythe and hope, but vayne wordes and vyſures only, accordynge to hys other diſgyſynge and names of ypocriſye.

All that commytte ſynne, cõmyt vnrighteouſneſſe, for ſynne is vnryghteouſneſſe.

What ſyn is.

The ſũme of Gods lawe.

That the Englyſhe calleth here vnryghteouſneſſe the Greke calleth Anomia, vnlawfulneſſe, or breakynge the law. So that all ſynne is breakynge of Gods law, and only the tranſgreſſion of Gods lawe is ſynne. Nowe all Gods lawes are conteyned in theſe two poyntes: Beleue in Chriſt, and loue thy neghboure. And theſe two poyntes are the interpretynge and expoūdyng of all lawes, ſo that what ſo euer edifieth in fayth and loue, is to be kepte, as longe as it ſo doeth. And what ſo euer hurteth fayth or loue, is to be broken immediatly, though biſhop, kinge, emperour or an angel cōmaūde it. And all indifferēt thynges ÿ nother helpe nor hurte fayth and loue, are whole in ÿ handes of father, mother, maſter, lorde and prynce. So that yf they wyl ſynne agaynſt God, and ouerlade our backes, we maye well runne awaye, yf we can eſcape, but not auenge our ſelues. But and yf they wyll breake into thy conſcience, as the byſhop of Rome doeth with his domme traditions, & ſayeth, to do this ſaueth thy ſoule, and to leaue it vndone loſeth thy ſoule, then defye them as the workes of Antichriſt, for they make the ſynne agaynſt ÿ faythe that is in Chriſtes bloude, by the which only thy ſoule is ſaued, & for lacke of that only, damned. And how loue breketh ÿ lawe, take an enſāple: It is a good lawe that men come to the church on the ſondayes to heare Gods worde, and to receaue the ſacrament of the body & bloud of Chriſt, in a remembraunce of his be-

Loue breaketh ÿ lawe.

neſytes and ſo to ſtrengthen thy ſoule, for to walke in his loue & in the loue of oure neghboure for his ſake.&c. yet yf my father mother, or ony other that requyreth my helpe be ſycke, I breake that good cõmaundement, to do my duty to myne elders or my neghboure. And thus all lawes are vnder loue and geue rowm to loue. And loue interpreteth thẽ: yee and breaketh them at a tyme, thoughe God hymſelfe cõmaunde them. For loue is lorde ouer al lawes, and the thynge that Chriſt commaũded aboue all other.

And ye knovv that he appeared to take avvaye oure ſynnes, & ther is no ſynne in hym.

The ſygnificacion of oure baptyme.

Chriſte dyed not alone to purchaſſe pardõ for our foreſynnes, but alſo to ſlaye all ſynne, and the lyfe of ſynne in our membres. For all we that are baptyſed in the name of Chriſte ſayeth Paule. Ro.vi, are baptyſed to dye wyth hym concernynge ſynne, and that as he after hys reſurrection dyeth nomore, ſo we after our baptyme ſhuld walke in a new lyfe, and ſynne nomore. Our mẽbres are crucyfyed wyth hym, in all that pertayneth vnto yͤ lyfe of ſynne. And yf in Chriſt be no ſyn, thẽ how can ther be wylfull ſynne in the fayth that is in hym, or in the quycke membres that thorowe fayth grow out of hym? Euery man therfore that hath the true fayth of Chriſte, purgeth hymſelfe, as he is pure.

All that abyde in hym ſynne not. And all that ſynne, haue nother ſene hym nor knovven hym.

As ther is no ſynne in Chriſt yͤ ſtock, ſo can ther be none in the quycke membres that lyue and growe in him by fayth. And they that geue them ſelues to ſynne haue nother ſene, knowen, or felt by fayth the mercy that is in hym. Our holy father then whiche forbyddeth matrimony, and geueth his diſciples lycences wyth his holy bleſſynge to kepe whores, and pluralytyes, vnions, and totquots, to robbe the paryſhes, hathe nother ſene nor knowen Chriſt, nomore haue his diſciples that cōſent vnto this iniquite. And yf they knowe hym not, they can not truely deſcrybe him vnto vs. It followeth thē that theyr preachynge is but ypocriſy.

Lytle chyldrē let no mā begyle you. He that vvorketh ryghteouſneſſe, is ryghteous, as he is ryghteous.

Iudge men by theyr dedes. ffor who ſo euer hath the lyght of God in hys ſoule, he wyll let hys lyght ſhyne, that men ſhall ſe hys good workes. And therfore where ye ſe not the ryghteouſneſſe of workes in the membres outwarde, there be ſure, is no ryghteouſneſſe of fayth in the harte inwarde. Let no mã mocke you wyth vayne wordes. Who ſo euer preacheth the Chriſt in worde and dede, hym take for Chriſtes vicare. And them that wolde proue thẽſelues hys vycares wyth Sophiſtrie, and whan it is come to ỹ point make a ſweard only of theyr myghty argumentes, & lyue contrarye to all hys doctrine, and in all theyr preachynges blaſpheme and rayle on hys bleſſed bloude, take for the vycares of Antichriſt.

Chriſtes vycare.

He that ſynneth is of the deuel, for the deuell ſynneth frõ the begynnyng But for thys cauſe appeared the ſonne of God. Euen to deſtroye the vvorkes of the deuel. Al that are borne of God do no ſynne, for hys ſede abydeth in them, and they can not ſynne, becauſe they be borne of God. And here by are the ſones of God knovven, and alſo the ſonnes of the deuell.

God and the deuell are two contrary fathers, two contrary fountaynes, and two contrary cauſes: the one of all goodneſſe, the other of all euell. And they that do euell, are borne of the deuell, and fyrſte euel by that byrth, yer they be euell. For yer a man do euell outwarde of purpoſe, he conceaued yͤ euell fyrſt in his mynde, & conſented vnto it, and ſo was euel in his harte yer he wrought euell: and yer he cõceaued euel in his harte, he was borne of the deuel, and hadde receaued of hys ſede and nature: By the reaſon of which nature, ſede and byrth, he worketh euell naturally, and can do none other. As Chriſt ſayeth Joh. viii. Ye are of the father yͤ deuel, and therfore wyl do the luſtes of your father, for it is a cõmune prouerbe: The chylde followeth his fathers nature.

The mã is fyrſt euell.

And on the other ſyde, they that do good, are fyrſt borne of God, and receaue of his nature & ſede, and by the reaſon of that nature and ſede, are fyrſte good yer they do good by yͤ ſame rule. And Chriſte which is contrarye to the deuell came to deſtroye the workes of the deuel in vs, and to geue vs a newe byrth, a new nature, and to ſow new ſede in vs, that we ſhulde by the reaſõ of that byrth, ſynne nomore. For the ſede of that byrth, that is to wete the ſprete of God, and the lyuely ſede of his worde, ſowen in oure hartes, kepeth oure

The mã is fyrſt good.

oure hartes that we can not conſente to ſynne, as the ſede of the deuell holdeth the hartes of hys, that they can not conſente to God. Thys is contrarye vnto the B. of Rome in two poyntes: In the one that he ſayeth, that oure good dedes make vs fyrſt good, and teacheth vs not to beleue in Chriſtes bloud, there to be waſhed & made fyrſt good. And in another, that he ſayeth, God choſeth vs fyrſt for our good qualyties and properties, and for the enforcemēte and good endeuoure of our frewyll. What good endeuoure is there where the deuell poſſeſſeth the whole harte, that it cā conſente to no good?

The faythful and vnfaythfull ſynne dyuerſly.

And fynally ther is greate difference betwene the ſynne of them that beleue in Chriſt vnfaynedly, and the ſynne of them that beleue not. For they that beleue, ſyn not of purpoſe & conſente to wyckedneſſe that it is good, caſtynge and compaſſyng aforehande wythout grudge of conſcience to brynge theyr purpoſe aboute. Theyr fathers conceaued myſchefe theſe eyghte hundreth yeares ago, and the ſonnes conſente vnto the ſame, and haue no power to departe there from. And therfore theyr ſynne is deuelyſh and vnder the damnacion of the lawe. But yf he that beleueth ſynne, he doth it not of purpoſe, or ỷ he conſenteth vnto the lyfe of ſynne, but of infirmytie, chaūce, and ſome greate temptacion that hath ouercome hym. And therfore hys ſynne is veniall and vnder mercy and grace, though it be murther, thefte, or adultery, and not vnder the damnacion of the lawe. So that hys father ſhall ſcourge hym, but not caſte hym awaye or damne hym. Marke the ſynne of Saul and of Dauid. Saul euer excuſed hys ſynne, and could not but perſecute the wyll of God: And Dauid confeſſed hys ſynne, wyth greate repentaunce at ỷ fyrſt warnynge, whē ſoeuer he forgat hymſelfe.

All that vvorke not righteouſneſſe are not of God, nor he that loueth not hys brother. For thys is the tydynges vvhiche ye herde at the begynnynge, that vve ſhuld loue one another, and not be as Cayn, vvhiche vvas of the deuell, and ſlevve his brother. And vvherfore ſlevve he hym? for hys dedes vvere euel, and hys brothers ryghteous. Maruayl not my brethrē though the vvorlde hate you.

The lawe of ryghteouſneſſe is, ỷ we loue one another as Chriſte loued vs, and he that hath not thys loue lyuynge in hys harte, and whan the tyme is, bryngeth not forth the frutes therof, the ſame is not of God, but of the deuell, whoſe byrthe and properte of the ſame ye ſe deſcribed in Cayn, how he reſyſted God and perſecuted ỹ chyldren of God for theyr belefe and workes therof. And as ye ſe in Cayn & hys brother Abell, ſo ſhall it euer cõtinue betwene the chyldren of God and of the deuell vnto the worldes ende. Wondre not therfore though the worlde hate you.

Vve knovve that vve are tranſlated from death to lyfe, becauſe vve loue the brethren. He that loueth not hys brother, abydeth in death. Al that hate theyr brethren are murthurers: & ye knovve that no murthurer hath eternall lyfe abydynge in hym.

Yf thou loue thy brother in Chriſte, & arte ready to do and to ſuffre for hym as Chriſte dyd for the, than thou arte ſure thereby that thou arte the ſonne of God, and heyre of lyfe, and delyuered frõ death and damnacion. So haue Chriſten men ſygnes to knowe whether they be in ỹ ſtate of grace or no. And on the other ſyde he that hath no power to loue hys brethren maye be ſure that he is in the ſtate of death and damnacion. Another is thys: Let

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every man loke vpon hys harte, & be ſure that he whyche hateth hys brother, hathe ſlayne hym before God, and is a murtherer, & murtherers ſhall not obtayne ỹ kingdome of God. Gala.v. but are Cayns brethren, and the deuels chyldren, and are heyres of death and euer vnder damnacion. Compare the regiment of the ſpiritualte whych haue had the temporall ſwearde in theyr handes nowe aboue.viii. hundreth yeares vnto this doctrine of Jhon, & iudge whether they haue led vs truely after the ſteppes of Chriſtes doctrine or no.

Hereby vve are aſſured of loue, becauſe he lefte hys lyfe for vs, and therfore oughte vve to leaue oure lyues for our brethren. He thẽ that hathe the ſubſtaũce of the vvorld, and ſeyth hys brother haue nede, and ſhutteth vp his compaſſon from him, hovv dvvelleth the loue of God in hym?

Yf we felte the loue of Chriſtes death, it wolde ſure ſet oure harte on fyre to loue hym agayne, and oure brethren for hys ſake, & ſhulde neuer ceaſſe to ſlaye oure reſyſtynge mẽbres, vntyl we could not only be well content, that our brethren were in proſperouſer ſtate than we: but alſo vntyll we coulde bleſſe them whan they curſe vs, and pray for them whā they perſecute vs, and to ſuffre death for them, to teſtify the word of theyr ſoules health vnto them, and wyth loue to ouercomme them, and to wynne them vnto Chriſte. Yf nowe euery chriſten man oughte to haue thys rule of hys profeſſion before hys eyes to learne it, that he ſhulde loue hys brother as Chriſte dyd hym, to departe wyth hys lyfe for hys brothers enſample, how farre are they of from good ſcolers, that can not fynde in theyr hartes to departe with a lytle of the abundaunce and ſuperfluyte of theyr temporall goodes, to helpe theyr neghbours nede?

My lytle chyldren let us not loue in vvord nor vvyth the tūge, but vvyth dede and of a truthe. For thereby vve knovve that vve be of the truth, and ſo ſhal vve certify oure hartes in hys ſyght.

Yf we haue power to worke, then doeth the worke certyfye oure hartes, that oure faythe in Chriſte, and loue to God and oure neghboure for hys ſake are vnfayned, and that we are true chyldren & no ypocrites. And then are we bolde in oure conſcience before God. And thys is it that Peter meaneth .ii. Peter .i. where he byddeth vs mynyſter in oure faythe vertue, Godly lyuynge, and al maner of good workes, and there with to make oure vocation and election, or oure callynge and choſynge ſure. For the ſyght of the worke doth certyfye vs that God hath called vs, and choſen vs vnto grace and mercye.

But and yf when the tyme of workyng is come, we flye and haue no power to worke, then wyll oure conſcience accuſe vs of ſynne and tranſgreſſion wyth in the harte before God, and ſo for feare of yͤ rod we darre not be bolde, but drawe back and ſtande a looſe.

Let a chylde haue neuer ſo mercifull a father, yet yf he breake hys fathers commaundementes, thoughe he be not vnder damnation, yet he is euer chyd and rebuked, and nowe and then laſhed wyth the rodde: by the reaſon wherof he is neuer bolde in hys fathers preſence. But the chylde that kepeth hys fathers commaundementes, is ſure of hymſelfe, and bolde in hys fathers preſence, to ſpeake and axe what he wyll. They that mynyſter well, get them good degre and greate confidence in the faythe that is in Chriſte Ieſu, ſayeth Paule.i. Timo.iii. He that worketh, is bolde before God and man. For hys conſcience accuſeth hym not wythin, nother haue we ought to wyte hym wt all, or to caſte in his teth. And as wout ſyghte of the workes James the Apoſtle can not ſe thy fayth Jaco.ii. nomore ſhal thou euer be ſure or bolde before God or man.

But yf oure harte condemne vs, God is greater then oure harte, & knovveth all thynge.

Yf our conſcience accuſe vs of ſynne, God is ſo great and ſo myghty, that it cã not be hydde.

Dearly beloued yf oure hartes condemne vs not, then vve truſte to godvvard. And vvhat ſo euer vve axe, that ſhall vve receaue of hym becauſe vve kepe his cõmaũdemẽtes & do the thynges vvhich are pleaſaunt in his ſyghte.

Keppynge of the commaundementes maketh a man ſe hys fayth, and to be bold therin. And fayth when it is wythout conſcience of ſynne, goeth into God boldlye, and is ſtronge and myghtye in prayer to coniure God by all hys mercyes, and therwith opteyneth what ſo euer he axeth, of all hys promyſes. And the texte ſayeth becauſe we kepe hys commaundemẽtes. Yee verely his cõmaũdemẽtes make vs bolde. But the keppynge of mens traditions and domme ceremonyes make not bold before

God, nor certifye oure conſciẽce that oure fayth is vnfayned. Thou ſhalt not knowe by ſprynkelyng thyſelfe wͭ holy water, nor kyſſyng ẏ pax, nor with takynge aſſhes, or though thou were anoynted with al ẏ oyle in teames ſtrete, ẏ thy fayth is ſure. But and yf thou couldeſt fynde in thyne harte to beſtowe bothe lyfe and goodes vpõ thy neghboure in a iuſt cauſe, and haſte proued it: then art thou ſure, that thou loueſt Chriſte, and feleſt that thou haſt thy truſt in hys bloude.

And thys is hys commaundement, that vve beleue in his ſõne Ieſus Chriſt, and loue one another, as he gaue commaundement.

Fayth is the fyrſt ⁊ alſo the roote of al cõmaundemẽtes. And out of fayth ſpryngeth loue, ⁊ out of loue, workes. And when I breake ony cõmaũdemẽt, I ſyn agaynſt loue. For had I loued, I had not done it. And when I ſynne agaynſte loue, I ſynne agaynſte faythe. For had I earneſtly and wyth a full truſte remembred the mercye that Chriſte hath ſhewed me, I muſt haue loued. Wherfore when we haue broken ony commaundement, ther is none other way to be reſtored agayne, then to go through repentaunce vnto oure fayth agayne, and

Fayth is ẏ roote of al commaũdementes.

are mercy for Chriſtes ſake. And aſſoone as we haue receaued fayth that our ſynne is forgeuen, we ſhall immediatly loue the commaundement agayne, and thorowe loue receaue power to worke.

And he that kepeth his commaundemẽtes abydeth in hym, & he in hym. And hereby vve knovve that ther dvvelleth in vs of hys ſpryte, vvhyche he gaue vs.

Thorow the workes we are ſure that we continue in Chriſte, and Chriſt in vs, and that his ſprite dwelleth in vs. For his ſpryte it is that kepeth vs in faythe, and thorowe faythe in loue, and thorowe loue in workes.

¶ The.iiii. Chapter.

DEarly beloued beleue not euery ſprete, but proue the ſpretes vvhether they be of God. For many falſe Prophetes are gone out in the vvorlde.

Spretes. Spretes are taken here for preachers, becauſe of the preachynge or doctryne, whyche yf it be good, then is it of ỹ ſprete of God: and yf it be euell, of the ſprete of the deuell. Nowe oughte we not to beleue euery mans doctrine vnaduyſedly,

or

oꝛ condemne ony mans pꝛeachynge yer it be herd and ſene what it is. But a chꝛiſten mans parte is to examen, iudge, and trye it, whether it be true oꝛ no. Quench not the ſpꝛete ſayeth Paule.i.Theſſalo. the laſt, nother deſpyſe pꝛophecyenges, but pꝛoue all thynge, and kepe that which is good. Deſtroye not the gyftes of the ſpꝛete of God, but trye whether they be of God, and good foꝛ the edifyenge of his congregacyon: and kepe that whiche is good, and refuſe that which is euell. And ſuffre euery perſone that hath ony gyfte of God, to ſerue god therin, in his degre and eſtate, after a chꝛiſten maner and a due oꝛdꝛe. Why ſhall we trye the doctrines? Verely foꝛ ther be many falſe Pꝛophetes abꝛode already. We tolde you befoꝛe that Antichꝛiſt ſhulde come, as oure mayſter Chꝛiſt tolde vs yͭ he ſhulde come But now I certify you that Antichꝛiſtes kyngdome is begon already. And his diſcyples are gone out to pꝛeach. Trye therfoꝛe all doctrine. Wherwith ſhal we trye it? With the doctrine of yͤ Apoſtles, and with the ſcripture, which is yͤ touch ſtone: yee and becauſe ye loue compēdiouſnes, ye ſhall haue a ſhoꝛte rule, to trye them withall.

The tryall of all doctrine.

Here by knovve ye the ſprete of God. Euery ſprete that confeſſeth that Ieſus Chriſte is come in the fleſhe, is of God. And euery ſprete that confeſſeth not that Ieſus Chriſte is come in the fleſh, is not of God. And the ſame is the ſprete of Antichriſt, of vvhom ye haue herde that he ſhulde come: And euen novv he is in the vvorlde already.

What ſoeuer opinion ony membre of Antichriſte holdeth, the grounde of all hys doctrine is to deſtroye this article of our fayth, that Chriſt is come in the fleſh. For though the mooſte parte of all heretykes confeſſe that Chriſte is come in the fleſhe after theyr maner, yet they denye that he is come as the ſcripture teſtifyeth, and yͤ Apoſtles preached hym to be come. The whole ſtudye of the deuell and all hys membres is, to deſtroye the hope and truſte that we ſhulde haue in Chriſtes fleſhe, and in thoſe thynges whyche he ſuffred for vs in hys fleſhe, and in the teſtament and promyſes of mercy, whyche are made vs in hys fleſhe. For the ſcripture teſtifyeth, that Chriſte hath taken awaye the ſynne of the worlde in his fleſhe, and that at the ſame houre that he yelded vp hys ſprete into the handes of hys father,

ther, he had full purged and made ful ſatiſfaccion for all the ſynnes of yͤ worlde. So that all the ſynne of the worlde, both before his paſſyon and after, muſt be put awaye thorowe repentaunce towarde the law, & fayth and truſt in his bloude, without reſpecte of ony other ſatiſfaccion, ſacrifyce or worke. For yf I once ſynne, yͤ lawe rebuketh my cõſcyence, and ſetteth variaunce betwene God and me. And I ſhall neuer be at peace with God agayn vntyl I haue herde yͤ voyce of his mouth, howe that my ſynne is forgeuen me for Chriſtes bloude ſake: And as ſoone as I beleue that, I am at peace with God. Roma.v. and loue his lawe agayne, & of loue worke.

And that Chriſte hath done this ſeruyce in his fleſh, denye all the membres of Antichriſt. And herby thou ſhalt know them. All doctrine that buyldeth yͤ vpon Chriſt, to put thy truſt and confidence in his bloude, is of God, and true doctrine And all doctrine that withdraweth thyn hope and truſt from Chriſt, is of the deuell, and the doctrine of Antichriſte. Examyne the Romyſh byſhop by this rule, & thou ſhalt fynde that all that he doeth, is to the deſtruccion of this artycle. He

The doctrine that is of God.

The doctrine that is of yͤ Deuel.

wreſteth all the ſcriptures, and ſetteth them cleane agaynſte the woll, to deſtroye thys artycle. He mynyſtreth the very ſacramentes of Chriſt vnto the deſtruction of thys artycle: and ſo doth he all other ceremonyes, and his abſolucion, penaunce, purgatory, diſpenſations, vowes, with al diſgyſynges. The Romyſh biſhop preacheth that Chriſte is come to do awaye ſynnes, yet not in the fleſh, but in water, ſalt, oyle candels, aſhes, freres cotes, and monkes coules, and in the vowes of them that forſweare matrimony, to kepe whores, and ſweare beggerye, to poſſeſſe all the treaſure, ryches, wealth and pleaſures of the worlde, and haue vowed obedience, to diſobey with authorite all the lawes, both of God and man. For in theſe ypocrityſh & falſe ſacrifices, teacheth he vs to truſt for the forgeueneſſe of ſynnes, & not in Chriſtes fleſh.

The B. of Romes doctrine of Chriſte.

Ye are of God lytle chyldren, and haue ouercomme them. For greater is he that is in you, then he that is in the vvorlde.

He that dwelleth in you, and worketh in you thorowe faythe, is greater then he which dwelleth & worketh in them thorow vnbelefe. And in hys ſtrengthe, ye abyde by youre profeſſion, and confeſſe youre LORDE Jeſus, how that he is come in ỷ fleſh and hath purged the ſynne of all that beleue in his fleſh. And thorow that fayth ye ouercomme them in the verye tormentes of death. So that nother theyr iuglynges, nother theyr pleaſures, nother theyr threatenynges, or tormentes, or the verye death, wherewyth they ſlaye your bodyes, can preuayle agaynſt you.

They be of the vvorlde, and therfore they ſpeake of the vvorlde, and the vvorlde attendeth vnto them. Vve be of God, and he that knovveth God, heareth vs. And he that is not of God, heareth vs not. And hereby vve knovve the ſprete of truth & the ſpret of erroure.

Two generacions in the worlde.

Ther be and euer ſhalbe two generacions in the worlde. The one of the deuell, whyche naturally herken vnto the falſe Apoſtles of the deuell, becauſe they ſpeake ſo agreable vnto theyr naturall complexion. And another of God, whych herken vnto true Apoſtles of God, and conſente vnto theyr doctrine. And thys is a ſure rule to iudge ſpretes by, that we iudge thẽ to haue the ſprete of truth, whych herken vnto the true doctrine of Chriſtes Apoſtles: & thẽ to haue the ſprete of errour, which herken vnto worldly and deueliſh doctrine, abhorrynge the preachynge of the Apoſtles. And loke whether the Romyſh Byſhops doctrine be worldly or no, yf pryde and couetouſneſſe be worldly, yee and lechery to. For what other is al hys doctrine, than of benefyces, promocions, dignities, byſhoprykes, cardinalſhips, vicareges, parſonages, prebendes, chaunge of byſhoprykes, and reſignynge of benefyces, of vnions, pluralities, totquots, and that whych commeth once into theyr handes, maye not out agayne: yee and of whores and concubynes and of captiuynge of conſciences for couetouſneſſe: and all that herken to that doctrine abhorre the Apoſtles, and perſecute it and them that preache the it.

The B. of R. doctrine is worldly.

Dearly beloued let vs loue one an other, for loue is of God. And all that loue are borne of God, and knovv God And he that loueth not, knovveth not God: for God is loue.

Jhon ſyngeth hys olde ſonge agayne, and teacheth an vnfallible and ſure tokē whych we maye ſe and fele at oure fyngers ende, and therby be out of all doute, that our fayth is vnfayned, and that we know God and be borne of God, and that we herken vnto the doctrine of the Apoſtles purely and godly, & not of ony curioſite, to ſeke glory and honoure therin to our ſelues, & to make a cloke therof to couer oure couetouſneſſe, and fylthy luſtes. Whyche token is, yf we loue one another. For the loue of a mãs neghboure vnfaynedly ſpringeth out of the vnfayned knowlege of god in Chriſtes bloud. By yͤ whych knowlege we be borne of God, and loue God, & our neghbours for hys ſake. And ſo he that loueth hys neghboure vnfaynedly, is ſure of hymſelfe that he knoweth God, and is of God vnfaynedly. And contrary wyſe, he yͤ loueth not, knoweth not God. For God in Chriſtes bloude is ſuche a loue, that yf a mã ſawe it, it were impoſſible yͤ he ſhuld not breake out into yͤ loue of God againe and of hys neghboure for hys ſake.

The funtayne of loue.

Here in appeared the loue of God vnto vs vvarde, becauſe God ſent hys onely ſonne in the vvorlde, that vve ſhulde lyue thorovve hym. Here in is loue: not that vve loued God, but that he loued vs, and ſente hys ſonne, a ſatiſfaccion for our ſynnes.

Yf a man had once felte wythin in hys conſcience the fearce wrath of God towarde ſynners, and the terrible & mooſt cruell damnacion that the lawe threateneth, and than behelde wyth the eyes of a ſtronge fayth, the mercy, fauoure & grace the takynge awaye of the damnacion of the law, and reſtorynge agayne of lyfe frely offred vs in Chriſtes bloude: he ſhulde perceaue loue, and ſo muche the more, that it was ſhewed vs, whan we were ſynners & enemyes to God. Rom. v. and that wythout al deſeruynges, wythout our endeuourynge, enforcynge and preparynge our ſelues, and wythout all good motions, qualities, and properties of our fre wyl. But whan oure hartes were as deade vnto all good workynge, as the membres of hym, whoſe ſoule is departed, whyche thynge to proue, and to ſtoppe ỹ blaſphemous mouthes of all oure aduerſaries, I wyll of innumerable textes reherſe one in the begynnynge of the ſeconde chapter to the Epheſians, where Paule ſayeth thus: Ye were deade in treſpaſſe and ſynne, in the whych ye walked accordynge to the courſe of the worlde, and after the gouernoure ỹ ruleth in ỹ ayre, the ſprete that worketh in the chyldren of vnbelefe, amonge whyche we alſo hadde oure conuerſacion in tyme paſt, in the luſtes of oure fleſhe, and fulfylled the luſtes of the fleſh & of the mynde (ſo that the fleſhe and the mynde were agreed both to ſynne, and the mynde conſented as well as the fleſhe) and were by nature the chyldren of wrath, as well as other. But God beynge ryche in mercy, thorowe the great loue where wyth he loued vs, euen whan we were deade in ſynne, hath quyckened vs wyth Chriſt: for by grace are ye ſaued: and wyth hym hath rayſed vs vp, and with hym hath made vs ſytte in heauenlye thynges thorowe Jeſus Chriſte, for to ſhewe in tyme to come the exceadynge ryches of hys grace, in kyndneſſe to vs warde in Jeſus Chriſte. For by grace are ye ſaued thorowe fayth, and that not of youre ſelues: for it is the gyft of God, and commeth not of workes, leſt ony man ſhulde boaſte hymſelfe.

But we are hys workemanſhip, created in Chriſte Jeſu vnto good workes, vnto yͤ whyche God ordened vs before that we ſhuld walke in them. The texte is playne. We were ſtone deade and wythout lyfe or power to do or cõſent to good. The whole nature of vs was captiue vnder the deuel, and led at hys wyll. And we were as wycked as the deuell now is, (Excepte that he now ſynneth agaynſt the holy gooſt,) and we conſented vnto ſynne, wyth ſoule and body, and hated the lawe of God. But god of hys grace only quyckened vs in Chriſt, and rayſed vs out of that death, and made vs ſyt wyth Chriſt in heauenly thynges. That is: he ſet our hartes at reſte & made vs ſyt faſt in the lyfe of Chriſtes doctrine and vnmoueable from the loue of Chriſte. And fynally, we are in thys oure ſeconde byrth Gods workemanſhip and creacion in Chriſt: ſo that as he whyche is yet vnmade, hath no lyfe nor power to worke, no more had we tyll we were made agayne in Chriſt. The preachyng of mercy in Chriſt quyckened our hartes thorow fayth wrought by yͤ ſprete of Chriſt, whych God poured into our hartes, yet we wyſt.

Dearly beloued yf God ſo loued vs, then ought vve to loue one another.

Yf we felte the loue of God in Chriſtes bloude, we could not but loue agayne, not only God and Chriſt, but alſo al that are bought wyth Chriſtes bloude. Yf we loue God for yͤ pleaſures that we receaue, than loue we oure ſelues. But yf we loue hym to do hym pleaſure agayne: that can we none otherwyſe do, than in louynge oure neghboures for hys ſake: thẽ that are good, to cõtinue them in theyr goodnes, & them that are euell, to drawe thẽ to good.

The vſe of loue.

Loue is the inſtrument wherewyth fayth maketh vs Gods ſõnes, and faſhioneth vs lyke the ymage of God, and certifyeth vs that we ſo are. And therfore cõmaundeth Chriſte Mathew the fyfte. Loue your enemyes, bleſſe them that curſe you, praye for them that perſecute you, that ye maye be the ſonnes of your heauenly father, whych maketh hys Sonne ryſe ouer good and badde, and ſendeth hys rayne vpon iuſte and vniuſte: yee whyche made the Sonne of hys mercy ſhyne vpon vs, and ſente the rayne of the bloude of hys deare and onely childe vpon our ſoules, to quycken vs, and to make vs ſe loue to loue agayne.

No man hath at ony tyme ſene God. Yf vve loue one another, God dvvelleth in vs, and hys loue is perfecte in vs.

No man hath ſene God.

Though we can not ſe God, yet yf we loue one another, we be ſure that he abydeth in vs, and that hys loue is perfecte in vs: that is, that we loue hym vnfaynedly. For to loue God truely, and to geue hym thankes, is only to loue oure neghboure for hys ſake. For vpon hys perſone thou canſt beſtowe no benefyte. And for ſo much as we neuer ſawe God, let vs make no ymage of hym, nor do hym ony ymage

The ſcrip: hath ſene God.

ſeruice after oure owne imagynatiõ, but let vs go to the ſcripture that hathe ſene him, and there wete what faſhion he is of, & what ſeruice he wyll be ſerued with. Blynd reaſõ ſayeth: god is a kerued poſt and wyl be ſerued with a Candle. But ſcripture ſayeth: God is loue, and wyl be ſerued with loue. Yf thou loue thy neghboure, then art thou ye ymage of God thy ſelfe, and he dwelleth in the lyuyng temple of thyne harte. And thy louynge of thy neghboure for hys ſake, is hys ſeruice and worſhyp in the ſpirite, and a candle that burneth before hym in thyne harte, & caſteth out the lyght of good workes before the worlde, and draweth all to God, and maketh hys enemyes leaue theyr euell, & come and worſhyp hym alſo.

Here by vve knovv that vve abyde in hym, and he in vs. For he hath geuen vs of hys ſprite.

He that hathe not Chriſtes ſpryte, the ſame is none of hys. Rom. viii. Yf we haue the ſprite of God, then are we ſure. But howe ſhall we knowe whether we haue the ſprite? Axe Jhon and he wyl ſaye yf we loue one another.

And vve haue ſene and do teſtifye that the father hath ſent hys ſõne, the ſaueoure of the vvorlde. Vvho ſo euer confeſſeth that Ieſus is the ſonne of God, in hym dvvelleth God, and he in God. And vve haue knovvē & beleued the loue that God hath to vs.

Fyrſt, the Apoſtles taught no fables, but that they ſawe and receaued of God, by the wytneſſe of hys ſprite. Secōdaryly Jhon aſcendeth vp one ſtep hyer, frō loue to fayth, and ſayeth: he that beleueth that Jeſus is Gods ſonne, hath God in hym. And J doubte not but the B. of Rome and hys defenders wyll anſwere Jhon, and ſaye: Thē the deuel hath God in hym, and is alſo in God. For other fayth, thē ſuche as yͤ deuel hath, felte they neuer ony. But Jhon preuenteth thē ſayeng: we haue knowen and beleued the loue that God hath to vs. That is, we beleue not only wyth ſtory fayth, as men beleue olde cronicles, but we beleue the loue and mercye that God ſhewed vs, and put oure truſt and confidence ther in: (and ſo taketh ſcriptur beleſe) We beleue that Jeſus is the ſonne of God, became man, and was ſlayne for oure ſynnes, whiche is a token of greate loue. And that loue beleue we, and truſte therto. Where Paule ſayeth. i. Corint. xii No mā can cal Jeſus LORDE (except the holy gooſt haue caught hym,) but thorow the holy gooſt. He meaneth not wyth the mouth only, but in the harte wᵗ vnfayned fayth, puttynge his hope and truſt in the lordſhip which he hath ouer ſynne, dānaciō hel and death. For ſo coulde no mā cal Jeſus LORDE, excepte the holy gooſte had caught hym, as Chriſte ſayeth Math. xvi. fleſh and bloude ſhewed the not that.

But yet how ſhal I ſe my fayth? I muſt come downe to loue agayne, and thence to the workes of loue, yet I can ſe my faythe. Not alwaye, but ſomtyme yͧ ſhalt fele thy fayth without yͤ outward dede, as in great aduerſite & perſecution, when the deuel aſſaulteth the with deſperation, & layeth thy ſynnes before the, & wolde beare the in hāde that God had caſt the away, & left the ſuccurreleſſe, for thy ſynnes ſake, then cōmeth fayth forth wᵗ hyr ſhyld, and turneth backe agayn the dartes of the deuel, and anſwereth: Nay, for Jeſus is yͤ ſonne of God: yee and my very God, & my very LORD, and hath taken awaye my ſynnes & all damnaciō. And this trouble & aduerſitie which is come vpō me, by ſettyng on of the & of thy ſynnes, is only to make me fele the mercy of my father & his power, and helpe within in my ſoule, and to ſlay the reſt of the poyſen which remayneth in the fleſhe.

God is loue, and he that abydeth in loue, abydeth in God, and God in hym.

Thys haue we herde aboue, and it is eaſy to be vnderſtonde.

Herefore is loue perfecte wyth us, that we ſhulde haue confidence in the daye of iudgmente.

How ſo euer thys texte dothe ſounde, thys me thynketh ſhulde be the meanynge: that we ſhulde prouoke eche other to loue, and euer haue thoſe enſamples of edyfyenge before oure eyes that ſhulde mooſte moue vs to loue. For perfecte loue ſerueth to make a man bold, becauſe it is the keppynge of the commaundementes. And therfore he that is perfecte in loue, when he ſeyth hymſelfe (yet in thys worlde) to be vnto his neghboure as God is vnto him, & to be lyke his heauẽly father in all enſamples of kyndneſſe, is bolde in the preſence of God: yee though he come to iudge ſynners. When on the other ſyde, they that cõtinue euer in theyr wyckedneſſe, & growe not in loue, fall often. And therfore theyr conſcience euer accuſeth them, and putteth them in feare, by the reaſon of the freſhe memory of the offence, that they can not accōce be bold, though they haue neuer ſo great pꝛomyſe of mercy.

Ther is no feare in loue, but perfect loue caſteth oute feare: For feare hath paynfulneſſe. He therfore that feareth, is not perfecte in loue.

Loue.

Loue is not paynfull, but maketh all thynge eaſy ⁊ pleaſaunt. Feare of punyſhment foꝛ the treſpaſſe newly commytted, is paynfull: Therfoꝛe where loue is perfecte, there is no ſuch feare. Loue is ẏ fulfyllynge of the commaundementes, and therfoꝛe where loue is perfecte, there is no ſynne. And where the conſcience doth not accuſe of ſynne, there is fayth bolde to go in to God, and to ſtande befoꝛe him, and loke hym in the face, and to coniure hym by all his mercyes, and to axe the petitions of his deſyꝛe. Lacke of loue is the bꝛeakynge of the commaundementes, ⁊ cauſe of ſynne. And where the cōſcience accuſeth of ſynne, there fayth is abaſhed, diſmade, aſhamed, and afrayed to go in, foꝛ fear of rebuke. Loue therfoꝛe ſerueth to make a man bolde in the daye of iudgement, and in all temptacions.

Feare.

Jhon ſpeaketh not generally of all maner feare, but of that only, whiche the conſcience of ſynne putteth a man in.

Foꝛ

For dyuerſe feares ther be that accompany loue, and growe as ſhe doeth. The more a woman loueth hir chylde, yͤ more ſhe careth for it, and feareth leſt oughte ſhulde chaunce vnto it amyſſe. Euen ſo the more we loue our brethren, the more we care for them, and feare leſt ony temtacion ſhulde trouble them. As Paule ſayeth, ii. Corin. xi Who is ſycke, and I am not ſycke? who is offended or hurte, & myne harte burneth not? how cared he for Timothe, for Titus, and for all that were weake, and for the Corinthiãs, Galathians, and for all congregacions? and how diligẽtly wrote he to them in his abſence? & the more we loue God, the more diligent and circũſpecte are we, that we offende hym not. And tel me I praye the, who ſo euer hath had experiẽce, what a payne and grefe, yee and what a fretting corroſefe is it vnto the harte of a true louer of God, to heare the poyſon generacion of vypers, the peſtilente ſecte of ypocritiſh phariſes, wyttyngly & wyllyngly to blaſpheme and rayle on the opẽ and manyfeſt truth of the holy gooſt?

Yf ye wyll ſe how bolde loue is, go to Moſes, Exodi. the. xxxii. Chapter, and Numeri the. xiiii. Chapter, and there beholde how he coniureth God, and among all ſayeth: Forgeue this people, or put me out of the boke that thou haſt wrytten. As who ſhulde ſaye, they be thy people, & thou commaundeſt me to loue them, and for thy ſake I loue them, and teach them, and care for them as a mother that had borne them, and loue them no leſſe then my ſelfe. Wherfore yf thou loue me as thou promyſeſt me, then ſaue them with me: or yf not, then caſt me awaye wyth them, and let me haue ſuche parte as they take. And Paule ſayd as muche Roma. ix. Loke vpon worldly loue, and ſe what pagientes ſhe playeth now & then, and how dronken a thynge it is: & be ſure where the loue of God is perfect, ſhe wyl not onely go betwene bodely death and hyr louer, but alſo betwene hym and hell. Yf a man wolde take of this, that a man myght be ſo perfyte in this lyfe, that he might not be perfyter, it wold not follow. For though the ſprete at a tyme get the vpperhande of the fleſhe, and wynneth her ſelfe ſo to God, that ſhe can not tell whether ſhe be in the body or no: yet the fleſhe wyll pull her downe agayne, & not let her continue, and now & then plucke of ſome of hyr fethers, for mountynge ſo hye agayne. For Moſes fell wel ynoughe thorowe vnbelefe after that feruentneſſe.

We loue hym, becauſe he loued vs fyrſte.

We deſerue not the loue of God fyrſte, but he deſerueth oure loue, and loueth vs fyrſte, to wynne vs, and to make vs hys frendes of hys enemyes. And as ſoone as we beleue hys loue, we loue agayne. And ſo faythe is mother of all loue. And as greate as my faythe is, ſo greate is loue, though fayth cã not be perfectly ſene, but thorowe the workes of loue, and in yͤ fyre of temptacion.

Fayth is yͤ mother of loue.

Yf a man ſaye, I loue God, and hateth his brother: he is a lyar. For howe can he that loueth not hys brother whome he ſeyth, loue God whom he ſeyth not? And thys commaundement haue we of hym: that he which loueth God, loue his brother alſo.

To loue a mans neghboure in God is a ſure rule to knowe that we loue God: and not to loue hym is a ſure token that we loue not God: and to hate oure neghboure is to hate God. For to loue God is to do hys cõmaundementes, as Chriſte ſayeth Joh. xv. Ye are my louers yf ye do thoſe thynges which I haue commaunded you: and the commaundement is to loue oure neghboures: then he that loueth not hys neghboure, loueth not God. And lyke wyſe to hate the commaundement, is to hate God that commaunded it: and the commaundemente is to loue oure neghboures: he then that hateth hys brother, whome oure God byddeth hym loue, hateth God.

¶ The.v.Chapter.

AL that beleue that Iesus is Christ are borne of God. And all that loue hym whiche begat, loue hym that is begotten of hym. In thys we knowe that we loue God, & kepe hys commaundementes. For this is the loue of God, that we kepe hys cōmaundementes.

Fayth maketh vs Gods ſons

Thys is a ſure concluſion that we be borne of God thorowe fayth, & that faythe maketh vs Gods ſonnes, in that we beleue that Jeſus is Chriſte, as the fyrſte chapter of Jhon alſo teſtifyeth: he gaue thē power to be the ſonnes of God, in that they beleued in hys name.

What is to beleue that Jeſus is Chriſte.

What it is to beleue that Jeſus is Chriſt, may be vnderſtande by that which is aboue rehearſed. It is a farre other thynge than as yͤ deuell beleued it agaynſt hys wyll, and to hys greate payne, or as they beleue it, whych to fulfyl theyr ſynne, enuye the glorye of Chriſt, and perſecute hys Goſpell, forbyddynge to preache it, or to reade in it. To beleue that Jeſus is Chriſte, is to beleue in Chriſte: that is, to beleue earneſtly, and to put al thy truſt therin, and to laye the pryce of thy ſoule thervpon, that the ſonne of Maria, whom the aungell commaunded to be called Jeſus, because he ſhulde ſaue his people from theyr ſynnes, is that Chriſte, that Meſſias, and that anoynted, whych God promyſed the fathers ſhulde come and bleſſe all nacions, and anoynte them wyth the oyle of hys ſprete, and wyth mercy and grace, and to delyuer them from death of theyr ſoules, whych is the conſentyng to ſynne, and to make them alyue wyth conſentyng vnto the lawe of God, and in certifyenge them that they be the ſonnes of God.

And to put the whole truſte in all that he ſuffred in hys fleſhe for thy ſake, and in al promyſes of mercy that are in hym, and that thou be fully perſuaded yͤ ther is none other name vnder heauen geuen vnto mē, to be ſaued from ſynne by, or to purchaſſe forgeueneſſe of yͤ leeſt ſynne that euer was cōmytted oꝛ euer ſhalbe in thys woꝛlde.

Another concluſion is thys: Who ſo euer loueth God, loueth all that beleue in God. For al that loue hym that begetteth, loue them that are begotten of hym: and all ꝧ beleue in God, are begotten of God thoꝛowe that beleſe, and made hys ſonnes: than all that loue God, loue all that beleue in God.

Another concluſion is thys: Whan we loue God and hys lawe, than we loue the ſonnes of God. Whych is thys wyſe proued: The loue of God is to kepe the lawe of God, by the texte befoꝛe and after: the lawe of God is to loue oure neghbouses, and therfoꝛe yf we loue God in kepynge hys lawes, we muſte nedes loue the ſonnes of God.

But Jhon ſhulde ſeme to be a very negligent diſputer to many men in that he here certifyeth vs of the loue of oure neghboures by the loue of God, whan aboue he certifyeth vs that we loue God becauſe we loue oure neghboures. He ſemeth to do as I herde once a greate clerke in Oxfoꝛde ſtāde halfe an houre in a pulpyt, to pꝛoue that Chꝛiſte was a true pꝛophete by the teſtimony of Jhon baptyſte, and another halfe houre to pꝛoue Jhon the

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baptiſte a true prophete by the authorite of Chriſt, as we ſaye, clawe me, clawe yͤ: and as euery theſe myght lyghtely proue hymſelfe a true man, in bearyng recorde to another as falſe as he, and takynge recorde of the ſame agayn. Which kynde of diſputyng, ſcoolemē cal petitio principii the prouyng of .ii. certayn thynges, eche by the other, and is no prouynge at al. As oure holy father proueth the authorite of ſcripture by hys decrees (for the ſcripture is not autentike, but as hys decrees admytte it) and to make hys decrees ſhyne and appeare gloriouſe, and to optayne authorite, he allegeth the ſcripture after hys iuglynge maner, to make fooles ſtarke madde.

But it is not ſo here, for both the demōſtrations are certayne, both the profe of the loue of God, & hys lawe by loue of my neghboure, and the profe of the loue of my neghboure by the loue of God and his lawe. For when .ii. thynges are ſo ioyned together, that they can not be ſeparated, then the preſence of the one vttereth the preſence of the other, whether ſoeuer thou fyrſt ſeyſt. As yf I ſe fyre, I am ſure that ſome thyng doeth burn. And yf I ſmel burnynge, I am certifyed of fyre: Euē ſo

The loue of God is cauſe of my neghbours loue.

loue of God is the cauſe why I loue my neghboure: & my loue towarde my neghboure is the effecte of yͤ loue of God. And theſe .ii. loues are euer inſeparable, ſo that whether ſo euer I fele fyrſt, the ſame certifyeth me of the other.

Jhon calleth the loue of a mans neghboure the dedes of loue, after the Hebrue ſpeche, as to helpe at nede, though he were euen an enemy to me, to geue the beſt coũſell I can, to vyſite and relyue hym yf he be ſycke and nedy, yee yf nede were, to beſtowe euen my lyfe alſo for hym. For the dede declareth what the man is wythin. Nother can my loue to God, and fayth be ſene to the worlde, ſaue thorowe the workes. And by the workes doeth Chriſte cõmaunde vs to iudge. So that yf a man haue euel workes, and continueth therin, he loueth not God, nor knoweth God, no though he call hymſelfe mayſter doctoure, or Gods vycare. Nother vnderſtandeth he Gods worde, for all hys hye diuinitie: but is in all hys preachynge an ypocrite, a falſe prophete, and a lyar, though hys preachynge pleaſe the worlde neuer ſo well. Neuertheleſſe a man is certifyed that he loueth God yer he come at the worke, by the teſtimonye of the ſprete, whych is geuen hym in earneſt. The ſprete ſayeth Paule. Roma.viii. teſtifyeth vnto oure ſprete, that we be the ſonnes of God: and than it teſtifyeth ẏ we beleue in God: for thorowe fayth are we ſonnes. And thā it certifyeth me that I loue God. For fayth and loue are inſeparable. The ſprete thorowe faythe certifyeth my conſcience that my ſynnes are forgeuen, and I receaued vnder grace, and made the very ſonne of God, and beloued of God. And than naturally myne harte breaketh oute into the loue of God agayne, and I ſeke how to vtter my loue, and to do God ſome pleaſure. And becauſe I can nother do ſeruyce or pleaſure vnto hys owne perſonne, my neghboure is before me, to do God ſeruice and pleaſure in hym, and to be to hym as Chriſt is to me, becauſe he is my brother, bought wyth Chriſtes bloude as I am.

And I conſent vnto that lawe, and loue it yer I come at the dede, and longe after the dede. And than whā I loue my neghboure in the dede accordynge to thys lawe, I am ſure that I loue hym truly. Or els yf I examined not my loue by thys lawe, I myght be deceaued. For ſome loue theyr neghboures for pleaſure, profite, glory and for theyr doynge ſeruice only, as oure ſpiritually loue vs, and of that bleſſed loue, do theyr buſy cure to kepe vs in darkneſſe: whyche loue is a ſygne that a man hateth God and hys neyghbour therto and loueth hymſelfe only. But Gods lawe is, that I ſhulde abſteyne from myne owne pleaſure and profyte, and become my neghboures ſeruaunte, and beſtow lyfe and goodes vpon hym, after the enſample of Chriſte. Wherfore yf I loue myne neghboure out of the loue of Chriſte, and after the enſample of hys lawe, I am ſure that I loue hym truely.

And hys commaundementes are not greueous. For all that is borne of God, ouercommeth the worlde: and thys is the victory that ouercōmeth the worlde, euen oure fayth.

A goodly ſimilitude of loue.

To loue is not paynfull: the cōmaundementes are but loue: therfore they be not greuous, because loue maketh the cōmaundementes eaſy. The ſeruyce that a mother doeth vnto hyr chylde is not greuous, because ſhe loueth it. But yf ſhe ſhulde do the tenth parte vnto one that ſhe loued not, hyr harte wolde braſte for impacience. Vnto a man that feleth not the loue of Chriſte, it is as impoſſible to kepe the commaundementes, as for a Camell to entre thorowe the eye of a nedle. But impoſſible is poſſible and eaſye to where the loue of Chriſte is beleued. For it followeth, all that are borne of God, ouercomme the worlde: that is to wete, the deuel which is the ruler of the world, and hys diſciples whych haue theyr luſte in hys gouernaūce and conſent to ſynne, bothe in bodye and ſoule, and geue themſelues to follow theyr luſtes wythoute reſyſtaunce: and theyr owne fleſhe, whyche alſo conſenteth to ſynne, do they ouercome, wyth al that moueth to ſynne. By what victory? Verely thorowe faythe. For yf oure ſoules be truely vnderſet wyth ſure hope and truſte, and continuall medicacions of Chriſtes loue, ſhewed already, & of ſuccurre, helpe & aſſiſtence that is promyſed in hys name, & wyth the continuall memory of theyr enſamples whych in tymes paſt haue fought thorowe fayth and ouercome: than were it impoſſible for the worlde wyth al hys chyualry, to ouerthrow vs wyth ony aſſault or with ony ordinaūce that he could ſhute agaynſt vs. For yf that fayth and meditacion were euer preſente in vs, than loue thorow that fayth, ſhulde eaſely ouercōme what ſo euer peryll thou couldeſt ymagyne. Reade in the byble, and ſe what conqueſtes faythe hath made, both in doynge and alſo ſufferynge. The.xi. Chapter vnto the Hebrues myniſtreth vnto the enſamples abundauntly. How myghty was Dauid whan he came to fyght, and how ouercame he thorowe faythe? And how myghtyer was he whan he came to ſuffrynge, as in the perſecucion of kynge Saul? In ſo muche that whan he had hys moſt mortal enemy kynge Saul, that.xii. yeares perſecuted hym agaynſt al ryght, (that whã he had gottẽ hym in hys hãdes to haue done what he wolde wyth hym) thorow faythe he touched hym not, nor ſuffred ony man els to do, though he was yet all hys lyfe a man of warre and accoſtumed to murther and ſheddynge of bloude. For he beleued that God ſhulde auenge hym on hys vnryghteous kynge, vpon whom it was not lawfull to auenge hymſelfe.

Vvho is it that ouercommeth the vvorlde, but he that beleueth that Ieſus is the ſonne of God?

Yf to beleue that Jeſus is Gods ſõne be to ouercõme the worlde, than oure prelates vnderſtãd not what belefe is, whych affirme that the beſt belefe, and the worſt man in the worlde, maye ſtande together.

Thys is he that came by vvater

and bloude Ieſus Chriſt: not by vvater only, but by vvater and bloude. And it is the ſprite that teſtifyeth, becauſe the ſprite is truthe. For ther are thre that beare vvytneſſe in heauē. The father, the vvord & the holy gooſt. And theſe iii. are one. And ther are.iii. vvhyche beare recorde in earth: the ſprite, vvater, and bloude, and theſe.iii. are one.

Chriſte came with.iii. wytneſſes, water, bloude, and ſprite. He ordened the ſacrament of baptyme to be hys wytneſſe vnto vs. And he ordeyned the ſacramente of his bloude, to be hys wytneſſe vnto vs. And poureth hys ſprite into the hartes of hys, to teſtifye and to make them fele, that the teſtimonye of thoſe.ii. ſacramentes are true. And the teſtymonye of theſe iii. is, as it after followeth, that we haue euerlaſtynge lyfe in the ſonne of God. And theſe.iii. are one full wytneſſe, ſufficient at the mooſt that ẏ law requireth, which ſayeth.ii. or.iii. at the mooſt is one full ſufficient wytneſſe. But alas, we are not taught to take the ſacramentes for wytneſſe, but for ymage ſeruyce, and to offre the worke of them to God, wyth ſuche a mynde, as ẏ old heythen offred ſacrifices of beaſtes vnto theyr Gods. So that what ſo euer teſtifyeth vnto vs, that we haue euerlaſtynge lyfe in Chriſte, that mouthe haue they ſtopped wyth a leuended maunchet of theyr pharisaycall gloſes.

Yf vve receaue the vvytneſſe of mē, the vvytneſſe of God is greater. For thys is the vvytneſſe that God hath borne of hys ſonne.

Yf the wytneſſe of men, whan they be iii. is to be receaued, muche more is the wytneſſe of God to be receaued. Nowe the wytneſſe that theſe.iii. water, bloude, and ſprite beare, is the witneſſe of God, & therfore the more to be beleued.

He that beleueth in the ſōne of God hath vvitneſſe in himſelfe. And he that beleueth not God, maketh hym a lyar, becauſe he doth not beleue the vvytneſſe that God hath teſtifyed of hys ſonne. And thys is the vvytneſſe, that God hath geuen vs eternall lyfe: and thys lyfe is in his ſonne. He that hath the ſonne, hath lyfe. And he that hath not the ſonne of God, hath not lyfe.

The true beleuers haue the teſtimony of God in theyr hartes, and they gloryfye God, wytneſſynge that he is true. They haue the kyngdome of God wythin them, and the temple of God wythin them,

them, and God in that temple, and haue the ſonne of God, and lyfe thorowe hym. And in that temple they ſeke God, and offre for theyr ſynnes the ſacrifice of Chriſtes bloude, and the fatte of hys mercyes in the fyre of theyr prayers, and in the confydence of that ſacrifyce go in boldlye to God theyr father.

But the vnbeleuers blaſpheme God, and make hym falſe, deſcribynge hym after the complexion of theyr lyenge nature. And becauſe they be ſo full ſtuffed wyth lyes, that they can receaue nothynge els, they loke for the kyngdome of God in outwarde thynges, and ſeke God in the temple of ſtone, where they offer theyr ymage ſeruice and the fat of theyr holy dedes: in confydence wherof they go into God, and truſt to haue euerlaſtyng lyfe. And though the texte teſtifyeth that thys lyfe is only in yͤ ſonne, yet they wyll come at no Sõne nor Sonne ſhynynge, but as vncleane byrdes, hate the lyght.

Theſe thynges haue I vvrytten vnto you that beleue in the name of the ſonne of God, that ye maye knovv that ye haue euerlaſtynge lyfe, and that ye maye beleue in the ſonne of God.

They that haue yͤ fayth of Chriſtes Apoſtles, knowe that they haue eternall lyfe. For the ſprete teſtifyeth vnto theyr ſpretes that they are the ſonnes of God. Rom. viii. and receaued vnder grace.

Oure doctours ſaye, they can not knowe whyther they be in the ſtate of Grace: therfore they haue not the fayth of the Apoſtles. And that they knowe it not, is the cauſe why they rayle on it.

Thys is the confydence that vve haue in hym, that yf vve axe oughte accordynge to hys vvyll, he heareth vs. And yf vve knovve that he heareth vs, vvhat ſo euer vve axe, vve knovve that vve haue the petitions that vve axe of hym.

Chriſt ſayeth Math. vii. Axe and it ſhalbe geuen you. And Joh. in the .xvi. cha What ſo euer ye axe in my name, he ſhal geue it you. To axe in the name of Jeſu Chriſt and accordynge to his wyll, be both one, and are nothynge els, but to axe the thynges contayned in the promyſes and teſtament of God to vs warde, that God wyll be our father, and care for vs, both in body and in ſoule: & yf we ſynne of fraylte and repent, forgeue vs, and myniſtre all thynges neceſſarye vnto thys lyfe

To axe in Chriſtes name.

lyfe, and kepe vs that we be not overcome of euell.&c. Now yf they whiche beleue in Chriſt are bold with God that he heareth them, and ſure that he graunteth theyr petitiōs, it followeth that they which are not bolde that he heareth thē, nor ſure that he graunteth theyr peticions, do not beleue in Chriſt. They that go to dead ſayntes, with whiche they neuer ſpake, nor wote where they be, be not bolde that God wyll heare them, nor ſure that he wyll graunte thē theyr peticyons, therfore they beleue not in Chriſt. That they be nother bolde nor ſure, that appeareth fyrſte by theyr dedes, and ſecondarely by theyr owne confeſſion, for they ſaye: What, ſhulde God heare them or graunt them ought, ſeynge they be vnworthy? yee and they confirme it with a ſymilitude of worldly wyſedome, yͤ they ſhulde be put backe for theyr malapertneſſe, and fare yͤ worſe. As yf a rude felowe ſhulde breake vp into the kynges priue chābre, and preaſſe vnto his owne perſon without knockynge or ſpeakynge to ony other officer: ſo that they beleue it an augmentynge of ſynne, to go to God themſelues in the confydēce of Chriſtes bloude as he bad them.

Yf a man ſe hys brother ſynne a ſynne not vnto death, let hym axe, and he ſhall geue hym lyfe, for them that ſynne not vnto death. Ther is a ſynne vnto death, and for it I ſaye not that thou ſhuldeſt praye. All vnryghteouſneſſe is ſynne. And ther is a ſynne not to death.

The ſynne to death.

What ſoeuer ſinne weſe in yͤ world, let vs praye, and not diſpayre. For God is the God of mercy. But for the ſynne to death, which is reſyſtyng grace, & ſyghtynge agaynſt mercy, and open blaſphemynge of the holy gooſt, affirmynge that Chriſtes myracles are done in Beelſebub, and his doctrine to be of the deuell, I thynke that no Chriſten man yf he perceaue it, can otherwyſe praye, then as Paule prayed for Alexander the copperſmyth the .ii. Tim. yͤ laſt: that God wolde rewarde hym accordynge to his workes. They that go backe agayne after they knowe the truth, & geue themſelues wyllyngly to ſynne, for to followe it and perſecute the doctrine of truth by profeſſiõ, to mayntene falſhed for theyr glorye and vauntage, are remedyleſſe: as ye maye ſe. Heb. vi. and. x. Balaam ſynned ſo, the falſe Prophetes in the olde teſtamẽt ſynned ſo, the Phariſes ſynned ſo, Alexander ſynned ſo, and now many ſynne ſo, followynge theyr pryde and couetouſneſſe.

Vve knovve that all that are borne of God, ſynne not: But he that is borne of God kepeth hymſelfe, and the vvycked toucheth hym not.

As thou readeſt in the thyrde chapter, they that are borne of God can not ſynne, for the ſede of God kepeth them. They can not caſt of the yocke of Chriſt and conſent to continue in ſynne, nor deſpyſe his doctrine, nor perſecute it, for to quench it, or to mayntene ony thynge cõtrary vnto it. But in what ſo euer captiuite they be in ỹ fleſh, theyr hartes yelde not, but ymagen to breake lowſe and to eſcape, and flye awaye, vnto the party & ſtandarde of theyr LORD Chriſt. And as men of warre they euer kepe watch and prepare themſelues vnto warre, and put on ỹ armure of God, the which is Gods worde, the ſhylde of fayth, the helmet of hope, and harneſſe themſelues with the meditatiõ of thoſe thynges which Chriſt ſuffered for vs, and with ỹ enſamples of all the ſayntes ỹ followed hym, & thynke earneſtly that it is theyr parte to lyue as purely as ỹ beſt, & come after as faſte as they can. And yet in all theyr workes they knowlege themſelues ſynners vnſaynedly, as longe as one iotte of theyr perfecteneſſe that was in the dedes of Chriſte, is lackynge in theyrs. So that the deuell can not touche the hartes of them, nother wyth pryde, or vayne glorye of pure lyuynge, nother to make thē conſentynge vnto ẏ fleſhe in groſſe ſynnes, yf at a tyme they be taken tardy and ketch a fall. What ſo euer chaunce them, the deuell can ketch no holde on them, to kepe them ſtyl in captiuite: but they wyll breake louſe agayne, and repent, and do penaunce, to chaſtyſe theyr fleſhe that they come no more vnder the deuels clawes.

Vve knovve that vve be of God, and that the vvhole vvorlde is ſet on myſchefe

They that beleue: that is to ſaye, put theyr truſt in Chriſte, ſe both theyre owne glorious ſtate in God, and alſo the wretched eſtate of the worlde in theyr wyckedneſſe. But the worlde as they knowe not God, nor the glorye of the ſonnes of God: Euen ſo they ſe not theyr owne myſerable eſtate in wyckedneſſe and damnacion vnder the lawe of God, but the worſe they are, the bolder they be, and the ſurer of thẽſelues, the farther from repentaũce, and the more ſtandynge in theyr owne cõceates, for the darkeneſſe that is in them. And therfore ſay our doctoures, a mã can not knowe whether he be in the ſtate of grace or no, nor nedeth to care therfore. And they be therfore the blynde leaders of the blynde.

Vve knovve that the ſonne of God is come, and hath geuen vs vnderſtandynge to knovve hym that is true: and vve be in the truth thorovve Ieſus Chriſte. He is very God and eternall lyfe.

Chriſt is al, and the fountayne of al, and of hys fulneſſe receaue we all. And as he poureth the gyftes of hys grace vpon them that beleue in hym, ſo he geueth thẽ vnderſtandynge to knowe the very God, and that they be in the verye God, and that they haue optayned that thorow hys purchaſynge: & leaueth not hys ſhepe in darkeneſſe. And the ſame Jeſu Chriſte is very God, and eternall lyfe. God and eternall lyfe was he from the begynnynge, and became man for the great loue he had to vs, for to brynge vs vnto hys eternall lyfe. And he that hath ony other waye thyther, whether they be hys owne workes, or other mens, or workes of ceremonyes, or ſacramentes, or merytes of ſayntes, or of ought ſaue Jeſu Chriſte onely: ſhall neuer come thither. The worlde ſeyth the byſhop of Rome, and ſeyth that they whyche be in hym, be lordes in thys worlde, & therfore they care to be in the B. of Rome: but whether they be in God or not they ſaye, it is not neceſſary to knowe.

Lytle chyldren bevvare of ymages.

Serue none ymage in youre hartes.

Jdolatrye: Jdolatrer.

Jdolatry is Greke, and the Englyſhe is ymage ſeruyce. And an Jdolatrer is alſo Greke, and the Englyſh an ymage ſeruaunt. Be not Jdolatrers, nor commyte Jdolatrye, that is, be none ymage ſeruauntes, nor do ony ymage ſeruice, but beware of ſeruyng all maner ymages. And thynke it not ynoughe to haue put all the ymages of falſe Gods out of the waye, yf ye nowe ſet vp the ymage of the very God and of hys true ſayntes in theyr rowmes, to do ẏ ſame ſeruice vnto them, whyche ye dyd to the other. For ye maye do as ſtronge ymage ſeruyce vnto the ymage of God and his ſaintes, as vnto the ymage of falſe goddes: yee thou mayeſt cōmytte as great ydolatry to God, & yet before none outwarde ymage, but before the ymage whyche thou haſt fayned of God in thyne hart, as thou mayeſt before an outwarde ymage of the deuell. The Jewes in the temple of God, where was none ymage of God, dyd as greate ymage ſeruyce to God, as the heythen vnto theyr falſe Gods: yee the Jewes in doynge to God the thynges whych god commaunded them, dyd commytte worſe Jdolatry, & ſynned greuouſlyer agaynſte God, than the heythen dyd in offerynge vnto theyr falſe Gods, whyche thynge to be true, the prophetes teſtifye. For whan the Jewes dyd theyr ceremonyes and ſacrifyces (the meanyng and ſygnificaciō loſt, and the cauſe forgotten whych God ordened them for) to flatter and pleaſe God w the gloriouſneſſe of the dede in itſelfe, and to purchace oughte of hym for the coſtlyneſſe or properneſſe of the preſent, what other made they of God in theyr ymaginacion, than a chylde? whom yf he crye or be diſpleaſed, men ſtyl wyth a popet, or yf we wyll haue hym to do ought, make hym an horſe of a ſtycke, or ſuch lyke.

Yf thou brynge a bole of bloude, and ſet it before God, to flatter hym, to ſtroke hym, and to coye and clawe hym, as he were an horſe, and ymagineſt that he hath pleaſure and delectacion therin, what better makeſt thou of God, than a bochers dogge? Yf thou brynge the fat of thy beaſtes to God, for the ſame ymaginacion, what makeſt thou of God, than one that had nede of greace to greaſe ſhues or ſmere bootes? Yf thou burneſt bloude and fat to gether to pleaſe God, what other thynge doeſt thou make of God, thã one that had luſt to ſmell to burnt floteſſe?

God commaunded a curteſye of all fyrſt rype frutes to be offred: not to be an ymage ſeruice, but a wytneſſe and teſtymony that he had made them growe, that yͤ people ſhulde not forget God, but thynke on hys benefytes, & loue hym, and of loue, kepe hys commaundementes. And lykewyſe yf ony hadde ſynned agaynſt Gods lawe, God commaunded that they ſhulde repente, and than brynge a beaſt, and ſlay it, and offre the bloude and the fatte of the inwardes: not to make ſatiſfaccion, but to teſtifye only that God was appeaſed, and had of hys mercy at the repentaunce of the harte forgeuen the ſynne. The ſacrifyces of bloude were ordeyned partely to be a ſecret prophecyenge of Chriſtes bloudeſheddynge, and partely to be a teſtimonye and certifyeng of our hartes, that yͤ ſynne was forgeuen, and peace made betwene vs and God, and not to be a ſatiſfacciõ. For that were ymageſeruice, and to make an ymage of God.

We reade in the hiſtories that whan a loue daye, or a truce was made betwene man and man, the couenauntes were rehearſed: and vpon that, they ſlewe beaſtes in a memorial and remembraunce of the appoyntment only. And ſo were theſe ſacrifices ſygnes and memorials only, that God was at one wyth vs. For the Iewes coulde beleue no wordes though an angell had ſpoken wythout a token, as we holde vp our fyngers and clappe handes. And lykewyſe what ſo euer they were bydden to do, they muſte haue had a token of remembraunce, though it had ben but a rynge of a ruſhe, as it is to ſe in the Byble.

It is Iewyſhneſſe not to beleue wyth ſygnes and myracles.

Euen ſo oure ymages, relyques, ceremonies, and ſacramentes were oure memorials and ſygnes of remembraunce only. And he that geueth in hys harte more to them than that, is an ymage ſeruaunt. But whan God is a ſprete and worſhipped in the ſprete, we for lacke of fayth, beynge ſpretleſſe, and hauynge no power to deſyre of God ony ſpirituall thynge, ſerue God in the body, wyth ymagined ſeruyce for ſuche worldlye thynges, as our profeſſion is to deſye. Who kyſſeth a relyque, or beholdeth an ymage for loue of the ſayntes lyuynge, to followe theyr enſample? Naye we wyl faſt the ſayntes euens, and go bare foote vnto theyr ymages, and take payne, to obtayne greater pleaſure in the worlde, and to purchaſe worldly thynges as maintayne the bodye in luſtes, that the ſoule cā not once wyſhe for power to lyue as the ſayntes lyued , or to longe for the lyfe to come. Yf we wente a pylgrimage to kepe the remembraunce of the ſayntes lyuynge in mynde for oure enſample , and faſted & wente barefoote to tame the fleſhe that it ſhulde not luſte after ſuche worldly thynges, whych we nowe deſyre of the ſayntes, than dyd oure faſtynge and pylgrimage goynge ſerue vs , yee and the ſaynte were yet oure ſeruaunte to edifye vs in Chriſte wyth the remembraunce of hys lyfe lefte behynde, to preache and to prouoke vs to followe hys enſample. For oure bodely ſeruice can be no ſeruice vnto the ſaynte whych is a ſprete, excepte we ymagen him to be an ymage.

S. Whyte muſt haue yearly a cheſe.

Saynte Whyte muſte haue a cheſe once in a yeare , and that of the greateſte ſorte, whych yet eateth no cheſe. It ſhalbe geuen vnto the poore in hyr name ſay they

Fyrſte

Fyrſt that to be falſe, we ſe wyth our eyes. Secondarely, Chriſt cōmaundeth to care for the poore, & geue them al that we maye ſpare in hys name, ſayenge that what is geuen them, is geuen hym, and what is denyed them, is denyed hym. Yf the lawe of Chriſte be wrytten in thyne harte, why diſtributeſt thou not vnto thy brethrē wyth thyne owne handes in the name of thy ſauoure Jeſu Chriſt, which dyed both for the and the, as thou haſt vowed and promyſed to hym in the baptyme?

Moreouer they ſaye: It is geuen vnto ſaynt Whytes chappellayne. Saynte Whytes chappellayne hath a ſtypende already ſufficient for a Chriſten man, and oughte to receaue nomore, but there wyth to be content, and to be an enſample of deſpyſynge couetouſneſſe. Moreouer, that preſt that wolde followe the lyuynge of Jeſu Chriſte as ſaynte Whyte dyd, and teach hys paryſſhes to do ſo, were a ryght chappellayne of Chriſte. And they haue a promyſe to be fedde and clothed, as well as euer was theyr mayſter in the name of Chriſte. And ſo be they and euer were, ſo that they nede not to begge in the name of ſaynt Whyte.

What ſhall ſaynte Whyte do for the

agayne for that greate cheſe? (for I wote well it is not geuen for noughte) ſhall ſhe geue abundaunce of mylke to make butter and cheſe? All we that beleue in Chriſt, are the ſunnes of God, & God hath promyſed to care for vs, for as much as we care for the kepynge of hys cōmaūdementes, and hath promyſed that we ſhall receaue what ſo euer we axe to hys honoure and oure nede, of hys hande. Yf we than be the naturall ſonnes of God, why rūne we from oure father, a beggynge to ſaynte Whyte? Saynte Whyte ſendeth no rayne vpon earth, nor maketh the Sōne ſhyne theron, nor maketh yͤ graſſe grow. Nother is ther ony Gods worde that he wyll now do ſo much for vs at hyr requeſt. But god hath promyſed yf we wyll kepe hys lawes to do ſo muche for vs at oure owne requeſte, for the bloude of hys ſonne Jeſu. What other thynge than is thy ſeruynge of S. Whyte, than lacke of ſayth and truſt to Godward in Chriſtes name, & a falſe fayth of thyne owne, faynyng to ſaint Whyte warde for thyne ymage ſeruice, or ſeruynge her wyth cheſe, as though ſhe were a bodely thynge? & lyke diſputacion is it of al other ſaintes.

And as we worſhip the ſayntes wyth ymage ſeruyce to obtayne temporall thynges:

ges: euen ſo worſhippe we God. And as the Jewes turned theyr ſacrifyces vnto ymage ſeruyce, which were geuẽ them of God to be ſygnes to moue them to ſerue God in the ſprete: Euen ſo haue we oure ſacramentes. And for an enſample let vs take the maſſe, whiche after the B. of Romes abuſe, is the mooſt damnable ymage ſeruice that euer was ſence it beganne. Chriſte accordynge to the teſtymonye of the ſcripture, made in the dayes of hys fleſhe, ſatiſfaction for all the ſynne of them that had beleued or ſhulde beleue in hys name, & obtayned that they ſhulde be the ſonnes of God, and taken from vnder the damnation of the lawe, and putte vnder grace & mercye, and that God ſhuld hence forth deale wyth them as a mercyfull father dealeth wyth hys chyldrẽ that runne not awaye from hym, no though ought be at a tyme chaunced amyſſe: but tary euer ſtyll by theyr father and by hys doctrine, and confeſſe theyr treſpaſſe, and promyſe henceforthe to enforce thẽſelues vnto the vtmoſt of theyr power that they do no more ſo neglygentlye. And thys purchaſe made he with the thinges which he ſuffred in his fleſhe, and wyth the ſtronge prayers which he prayed. And to kepe this

Maſſe is made an ymage ſeruice.

teſtament, euer freſh in mynde, that it were not forgotten, he left wyth vs the ſacrament of his body & bloude, to ſtrengthen, our fayth and to certifye our cõſcyence, that our ſynnes were forgeuen aſſoone as we repented and had recõcyled our ſelues vnto our brethrẽ, and to arme our ſoules, thorowe the continuall remẽbraunce of Chriſtes death, vnto the deſpyſynge of the worlde, mortifyeng of the fleſh, and quenchynge of the luſtes and thyrſt of worldly thynges. As they whiche haue dayly conuerſacion wyth the ſycke and myſerable, & are preſent at yͤ deathes of men, are moued to defye the worlde, and the luſtes therof.

And as Chriſt had inſtute the ſacrament of his body and bloude, ſo the byſſhops in the proceſſe of tyme, ſet ſygnes of all the reſt of Chriſtes paſſion, in the ornamentes and geſtures of the maſſe: ſo that the whole paſſion was dayly deſcrybed before our eyes, as though we had preſently loked vpon it.

The ryght vſe of the maſſe.

And marke alſo for what cauſe they came vnto the ſacrament: they reconcyled themſelues eche one to other, yf ony man had offended his brother, yer they were admytted into the congregacion

of

i.Cor.xi.
i.Cor.x.
Ephesi.4.

or body of Chriſt to be membres of eche other, knyt together in one fayth & loue to eate the lordes ſupper (as Paule calleth it) for the congregacion thus gathered is called Chriſtes bodye, and Chriſte theyr heade. And lykewyſe yf a man had ben taken in open ſynne, agaynſt the profeſſyon of his baptyme, he was rebuked openly. And he confeſſed hys ſynne opēly, and axed forgeueneſſe of God and of the congregacion, whom he had offended wᵗ the enſample of his euell dede: and toke penaunce as they call it, of the congregacion, that is certayne diſcrete iniunctiōs how he ſhulde lyue and ordre hymſelfe in tyme to come and tame his fleſhe, for the auoydynge of the ſayd vyce: becauſe hys confeſſion and repentaunce which he ſemed to haue, ſhulde be none ypocriſy, but an earneſt thynge. For yf an open ſynner be founde amonge vs, we muſt immediatly amende hym, or caſt hym out of yͤ cōgregacion wyth deſyaunce and deteſtacyō of his ſynne, as thou ſeyſt how quyckly Paule caſt out the Corinthian, yᵗ kept his fathers wyfe, and whan he was warned wolde not amende. Or els yf we ſuffre ſuch to be amonge vs vnrebuked, we can not but attonce fal from the conſtan rye of our profeſſion, and laugh and haue delectacion and conſent vnto theyr ſynne, as it is come to paſſe thorow out all chriſtendome. Whiche is ten thouſāde tymes more abominable then yf we ſynned oure ſelues. For the beſt man in the worlde that hateth ſynne, myghte at a tyme thorowe fraylte of the fleſhe be drawen to ſynne. But it is altogether deuelyſhe and a ſure token that the ſprete of Chriſte is not in vs nor the profeſſion of our baptyme written in the harte, yf we laughe at another mans ſynnes, though our ſelues abſteyne for ſhame or feare of hell, or for what ſo euer ymagynacion it be: or that we be ſo blynde that we ſe none other ſynne in vs, then oure outwarde dedes. And yͤ penaūce enioyned frayle perſones, that coulde not rule themſelues was vnder the authorite of the curate and the ſadde and diſcrete men of the paryſh, to releaſſe parte, or al at a tyme, yf neceſſyte requyred, or whā they ſawe the perſonne ſo growen in perfectnes that he neded it not. But ſe wherto it is nowe come, and after what maner oure holy father that is at Rome diſpenſeth wyth altogether. And ſe what oure byſhoppes offycers do, where the authorite of the curate and of the Paryſhes is become.

yf in .x. paryſhes rounde ther be not one learned and diſcrete to helpe the other, then the deuell hath a greate ſwynge amonge vs, that the byſhops officers that dwel ſo farre of, muſt abuſe vs as they do. And yf within a dioceſe or an whole lande we can fynde no ſhyfte, but that yͤ byſhop of Rome that dwelleth at yͤ deuell in hell, muſt thus mocke vs, what a ſtroke thynke ye hath Satan amonge vs? And all is becauſe we be ypocrites, and loue not the waye of truth, for all our pretendynge the contrary.

And to begynne wythall, they ſayde Confiteor, and knowleged themſelues to be ſynners. And then the preſt prayed in generall for al eſtates and degrees and for encreace of grace, and in eſpecyall, yf nede requyred: vnto whiche prayers the people herkened and ſayde. Amen. And then the Goſpell and glad tydynges of forgeueneſſe of ſynnes was preached, to ſteare vp our fayth. And then the ſacrament was myniſtred for the confyrmacion of the faythe of the Goſpel, and of the teſtament made betwene God and vs of forgeueneſſe of ſynnes in Chriſtes bloude, for oure repentaunce and faythe: as ye ſe how after all bargens ther is a ſygne therof made, ether clappynge of handes, or bowynge a peny or a grote, or a pece of golde or geuynge ſome earneſt, and as I ſhewed you, howe after a truſe made they ſlewe beaſtes, for a confirmacion. And then men departed, euery man to his buſyneſſe, full certifyed that theyr ſynnes were forgeuē, and armed wyth the remembraunce of Chriſtes paſſion and death for the mortyfyenge of the fleſhe all the daye after. And in all theſe was nother the ſacrament, nother other ceremonyes of the maſſe ymage ſeruyce vnto God, and holy dedes to make ſatiſfaction for our ſynnes, or to purchaſſe ſuche worldly thynges as the goſpell teacheth vs to deſpyſe. And now cōpare thys vſe of the maſſe to oures, and ſe whether the maſſe be not become the mooſt damnable ydolatrye and ymageſeruice that euer was in the worlde.

We neuer reconcyle oureſelues vnto oure brethren whych we haue offended: we receaue vnto oure maſſe the open ſynners, the couetous, the extorcyoner, the adulterer, the bakbyter, the cōmune whore and the whorekeper, whiche haue no parte in Chriſte by the ſcripture, yee ſuch are ſuffred to ſaye the maſſe, as the vſe is nowe to ſpeake: yee ſuche are we compelled wyth the

the ſwarde to take for our paſtores and curates of oure ſoules, and not ſo hardy as to rebuke them. Nother do they repent and confeſſe theyr ſynnes, and promyſe amendement, or ſubmytte themſelues to wholſome iniunctions for the auoydynge of ſuche ſynnes, and tamynge of theyr fleſhe. We ſaye confiteor, and knowlege oure ſelues to be ſynners in latyne, but neuer repent in Englyſh. The preſte prayeth in latyne, and ſayeth euermore a ſtyll Maſſe, as we ſaye. For thoughe he ſynge and ſtreyne hys throte to crye loude vnto them that be by hym, yet as longe as no mā woteth what he prayeth, or whether he bleſſe or curſe, he is dome a ſpechleſſe. And ſo in that parte we abyde frutleſſe, and vntaught how to praye to God. And the Goſpell is ſonge or ſayde in latyn only, and no preachynge of repentaunce towarde the lawe, and faythe towarde Chriſte had. And therfore abyde we euer faythleſſe and without ſtudyenge to amende oure lyuynges. And of the ceremonyes of the maſſe we haue none other ymagynacion, then that they be an holy ſeruyce vnto god whych he receaueth of oure handes, and hath great delectacion in them, and that we purchaſe greate fauour of God wͭ thẽ, as we do of great mẽ here in the worlde with gyftes and preſẽtes. In ſo much that yf yͤ preſt ſayd maſſe without thoſe veſtimentes, or lefte the other ceremonyes vndone, we ſhulde all quake for feare, and thynk that ther were a ſynne commytted ynough to ſynke vs all, and that the preſt for his labour were worthy to be put in the byſhop of Romes purgatory, and there to be brent to aſhes

And of the very ſacramẽt it ſelfe we knowe none other thynge, then that we come thyther to ſe an inuiſible myracle, Neuerthelater it were ſomewhat yet, yf they had bene as louynge, kynde, carefull and diligente to teache the people to repente, & to beleue in the bloude of Chriſt for the forgeueneſſe of theyr ſynnes, vnto the glorye of the mercy of god, and of hys exceadynge loue to vs, and vnto the profyte of our ſoules, & vpon that preachyng to haue miniſtred the ſacramente as a memortall, remembraunce, ſygne, token, earneſt, the ſeale of an obligacion, and clappynge of handes toghether for yͤ aſſuraũce of the promyſe of God, to quyet, ſtablyſh and certifye our conſcyences, and to put vs out of al waueryng and doute, yͭ our ſynnes were forgeuen vs, & God become our father and at one wyth vs, for whyche cauſe onely Chriſt ordened it: as they were zelous and ſeruent to mayntene the ceremonies of the maſſe in all poyntes. For nowe they haue taken awaye the ſygnificacion and very entent of the ſacramente to ſtablyſhe the eare confeſſion, theyr merytes, deſeruynges, iuſtifyenge of workes, and lyke inuencion vnto theyr owne glorye and profyte: what doth the ſacrament admonyſh vs of reconcilynge vs to God? But now they haue deſtroyed for ỹ nonce that fayth whyche profyted, & haue ſet vp wyth wyles, ſotylty, falſhed, gyle and with violence, that fayth whyche profyteth not: we haue good cauſe to iudge and examine the doctrine of the ſpretes, whether it be groūded vpō Gods worde or no. We take paynes to come thether to ſe ſtraūge holy geſtures, wherof, ſaye they to theyr ſhame who knoweth the meanynge? and to heare ſtraunge holy voyces, wherof, ſaye I alſo that no mā knoweth the vnderſtandynge, and to loke vpon the ſacrament, and all to optayne worldly thynges, for that ſeruice. Why, maye not all men deſyre worldly thynges of God? Yes, we ought to aſke of God onely ſufficiency of all worldly thynges, as we do ſpirituall thynges, yet not for bodely ſeruyce, ſeynge God is a ſprete: but for the goodneſſe and mercy of our father, and for the truth of hys promyſe and deſeruynges of hys ſonne. And ſo whã we do mẽ bodely ſeruice, we ought to loke for oure wages of God: leſt yf he moue not yͤ hartes of our mayſters, we be ſhrewedlye payed: and lykewyſe whan we lende or bargene, we oughte to deſyre God for paymente, leſt thorowe our negligence he forget vs, and the appoyntmentes be not truly kepte. Some ther be yet that aſke heauen for bodely ſeruyce, whych is lyke abhominacion.

But who commeth thyther wyth repentaunce and fayth, for to obtayne forgeueneſſe of hys ſynnes, and wyth purpoſe to walke in the lyfe of penaunce, for the tamynge of the fleſh, that he ſynne nomore: and to ſtablyſh hys harte in that purpoſe, and to arme hys ſoule agaynſt al that moueth to the contrary, and whan he goeth home, is certifyed in hys conſcience, thorow that ſygne and token, that his ſynnes are forgeuen hym: As Noe was certifyed by the ſygne of yͤ raynebow that the world ſhulde nomore be ouerrunne wyth water, and as Abraham was certifyed by yͤ ſigne of circũciſion, that God wolde fulfyll to hym and hys offſpringe al yͤ mercyes that he had promyſed: and as Abraham Gene. xv. whē he aſked a ſigne to be ſure that he ſhulde poſſeſſe the lande of Canaan, was certifyed thorow yͤ ſygne that God gaue hym therof, & of the foure hūdreth yeares that hys poſterypte ſhulde be in thraldome in Egipte, and of theyr delyueraunce: and as Gedion was certifyed by the ſigne of hys fleſe, of the victorye that God had promyſed hym: and as many other that beleued in God were certifyed by the ſygnes that God gaue thē, of the promyſes which God made them? Verely no man. For oure prelates which laye for themſelues, compelle intrare, cōpell not vs to entre into ony ſuche feaſte, nor wyll ſuffre ony ſuch meate to be ſet before vs: for feare of ouerthrowynge the foundacion of theyr falſe buyldynge, wherof ſpringeth ſo great glorie and profit vnto thē, which fundacion to buylde theyr lyes vpō, they coulde neuer haue layed, excepte they had fyrſte thruſt this doctrine of oure ſoules health cleane out of knowlege. And as ſoone as they had blynded that lyght, they became leaders in darkneſſe, and made of yͤ maſſe Imageſeruice: ſo that the ſtraunge holy geſtures, muſt be meritorius workes to deſerue longe lyfe, health, ryches, honoure, fauour, dignite, and abundaūce of all that we haue, forſakynge our baptyme, & to arme vs from bearynge of the croſſe wyth Chriſte. And they haue made of it a pyll of two contrarye operacions: ſo that the ſame medecine that preſerueth our ſoules from purgatory, dothe purge the body of houſe, landes, rētes, goodes and mony. And the lyght that rebuketh thē, they call ſedicious, that it maketh the ſubiectes to ryſe agaynſt theyr prynces. Whych thyng the ypocrites layed ſometyme vnto yͤ prophetes, as ye maye ſe in the olde teſtament And at laſte they layed it vnto Chriſtes charge, as ye maye ſe in the Goſpel, and to the charge of the Apoſtles, as ye may ſe in theyr actes. But at all ſuche tymes, the ypocrites themſelues ſteared vp ſuch a ſwearde to mayntene theyr falſhed, yͭ euermore a greate parte of the worlde peryſhed thorowe theyr owne myſcheuous prouokynge prynces to battayle.

¶ Thus much I haue ſayd becauſe of thē that deceaue you, to geue you an occaſion to iudge the ſpretes.

¶ Here begynneth the .ii. Epiſtle of S. Jhon.

THe Elder vnto the elect lady and hyr chyldren, whyche I loue in the truth: and not I only, but alſo al that haue knowē the truth, for the truthes ſake, whych remayneth in vs, and ſhal be in vs for euer: wyth you be grace, mercy and peace, from God the father and frō the LORDE IESVS CHRIST the ſonne of the father, in truthe and loue.

Thys all is the tytle and ſuperſcripcion of the Epiſtle or lettre, wherein (to cōfyrme it the more) he ſetteth hys name, office, to whome he wryteth it, and an Apoſtolicall ſalutacion or wyſſhynge. And is as much to ſay: as I Jhon the Elder wryt thys Epiſtle vnto the faythfull congregacion, and vnto the ſame I wyſh grace and peace, and that they perſeuer or continue in the truth and loue. The cauſe why he calleth hymſelfe the Elder and not Jhon J reken be, that it was mooſt vſed of euery man and commune, and full of Apoſtolicall ſwetneſſe and authorite: not only because of the worſhippe of age, but alſo by reaſon of the holy callynge and office .

Moreouer he calleth the church or congregacion a lady, because ſhe is the bryde of yͤ LORDE Jeſus: and the membres of the church he calleth chyldren, remaynynge ſo ſtyll in comparynge and aludynge. As for hys wyſhynge is playne ynough, for it is ſo ryfe in other Epiſtles. But Jhon addeth Truth & Loue , as hys maner is to dryue it, deſyrynge them to be and continue therin. The truth doth he ſet agaynſt ypocriſy and erroure and lyes, that it be nothynge, but a true faith. Charite conteyneth al exercyſe of godlyneſſe. Beſyde thys he mengleth amonge ſuch thynges as maye procure vnto hym fauoure of yͤ hearers & ſom thynges of the truth, to make the hearers myndes to geue hede, and to cōfirme and ſtablyſh the ſayenge: Whych J loue in the truth, that is, truly, hartely and ſyncerely. For Chriſten charite ought to be without al ſimulacion & ypocriſy. J loue them for the truthes ſake, that is: because they exercyſe the truth, do J loue thē. And not only

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do I loue the, but alſo all they that knowe the truth, where by he rayſeth vp theyr hartes and corages, and entyſeth them to farther endeuoure of godlyneſſe. To thys alſo pertayneth it ẏ he ſayeth, that the truth ſhall abyde wyth vs for euer: by the whych comfortable ſayenges we can not but be confirmed and ſtablyſhed in godlyneſſe.

I reioyced greatly that I founde of thy chyldren walkynge in the truthe, as we haue receaued a commaundement of the father.

He begynneth hys matter wyth reioycynge, beynge glad that ther be founde amonge them ſuche as refuſynge errours and deceauers, haue layed handes on the truthe. And that not euery truthe, (for thoughe they be ſomtyme neuer ſo farre from it, yet do they thynke to holde faſte the clere truthe) but that truthe that is geuen of the father by the very euangelicall doctrine. Nother can ther be ony other truth. Thus ſe we than and learne wherfore we ought to reioyce: We ſe whych be the rule of the true and godly truth. For an earneſt a true fayth can not but braſte out in workynge and declarynge the inwarde treaſure that God hath commytted vnto oure fidelite and truſt.

Thys reioycynge had Paule alſo of hys Philippians, Colloſſians and Theſſalonians that (lyke faythfull ſtewardes) gaue out the manyfolde grace commytted vnto them by Paules preachynge: ſo that they receaued it agayne wt vauntage: that is, heauenly and ſpiritual for worldly and temporall, and a vncorruptible crowne, for deſpyſynge worldly goodes.

And now I beſeke the Lady, not as though I wrote a new commaundement vnto the, but that ſame whyche we had from the begynnyng: that we ſhulde loue one another. And thys is the loue, that we ſhulde walke after hys commaundementes.

He exhorteth them to procede cõſtaũtly in the euangelicall truthe, & to loue eche other. And in commendynge thys to them he alleged two poyntes, namely: the author therof, and hys auncientneſſe. It is not I (ſayeth he) that commaunde you to continue in the truth, but the LORD hym ſelfe, whych ſayeth in the Goſpell: He that cõtinueth vnto the ende, ſhalbe ſaued. Nother do I wryte a new commaundement, or lately ſpronge vp amonge vs, but the mooſt auncient, the whych was alſo commaunded in the lawe, where it is wrytten on thys wyſe: Loue thy LORDE God aboue all, and thy neghboure as the ſelſe. That (I ſaye) that Chriſt reſtored, & that floryſhed from the begynnynge of true religiō, namely: that we loue eche other; that do I wryte vnto you. Lo howe commendable thys be, and not to be refuſed. And for farther declaration he ſayeth: And that is the loue, that we ſhulde walke after hys cōmaundementes. Thys (namely) is ẏ pyth of loue or Chriſten charite, to kepe the cōmaundementes. For our LORDE in the Goſpell (from whence theſe wordes ſeme to be taken) ſayeth: He that hath my commaundementes, and kepeth them, he it is that loueth me. And agayne: Abyde in my loue. Yf ye kepe me commaundementes, ye ſhall abyde in my loue. That is my commaundemente, that ye loue eche other as I loued you. Nother let ony man maruayle at theſe wordes of oure Saueoure: For all the cōmaundementes are referred euery where to loue; yee and of Paule alſo Rom.xiii.

Thys commaundement is, that (as ye haue herde from the begynnynge) ye ſhulde walke in it. For many deceauers are entred into the world, which confeſſe not that Ieſus Chriſte is come in the fleſhe. This is a deceauer, and an Antichriſte.

He rehearſeth and beateth in charite or loue as his maner is to do: and hereto he allegeth a cauſe, the which ſteareth the church to a redyneſſe, and watchynge, & to an earneſt endeuoure of godlyneſſe. For this cauſe ſayeth he do I ſo earneſtly beate in loue, for this cauſe ought you be dilige̅t namely: becauſe ther are many deceauers come into the worlde, yͤ are buſy to drawe you into erroure from the waye of truthe. Frō ſuche endeuoure to withdrawe youre ſelues, goynge forth & procedyng in true religion, truth & loue. Beſyde thys he paynteth and deſcribeth ſuche deceauers wͭ certayne notes or markes, ſayenge: They cōfeſſe or graunt not that Chriſte Jeſus the Meſſias very God & mā, of whom yͤ prophetes prophecyed aforehande, ſhulde come in the world. Of ſuch he geueth verdyte cōtynently, ſayenge: This is a deceauer or withdrawer & Antichriſt. The true ſygnificacion of yͤ word Antichriſt is as much, as agaynſt Chriſt or contrary to Chriſte. Now trye all learnynges & conferre thē to yͤ true doctrine of Chriſt, ether in the olde or new teſtament, & yf thou fynde them diſagreynge to yͤ foreſayde true doctrine,

What Antichriſt is to ſaye.

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ounte both the doctrine, & hym that vttereth it euen Antichriſt, & the doctrine damnable: Euē as vnlawful marchaundyſe is. Of this loke farther in yͤ.i.epiſtle yͤ.ii.and iiii.chapters, where it is farther declared.

Loke on your ſelues, that ye loſe not that we haue wroughte, but that we maye haue a full rewarde.

He reaſoneth of the harme or daunger, and theſe wordes ſeme to be taken oute of Ezechiell the.xviii.Chap.where he ſayeth: Yf the ryghteous turne awaye from hys ryghteouſneſſe, & do iniquite, accordynge to all the abhominaciōs yͤ the wycked man doth, ſhall he lyue? all the ryghteouſneſſe that he hath done ſhall not be thought vpō.

It is a ſhorte & pythy ſentence to moue or admonyſhe where he ſayeth: loke on your ſelues, & is as muche to ſaye, as: Let euery one beware, leſt he beynge rechleſſe in that he hath wel begonne, leſe all yͤ frute of ſuch good dedes as he hath hetherto wel accomplyſhed: But rather paſſynge by all Antichriſtes doctours let vs ſo rūne, yͤ we may receaue a ful rewarde: yͤ which none do receaue, but ſuch as endure vnto yͤ ende

Who ſo euer tranſgreſſeth and abydeth not in the doctrine of Chriſte, hath not God: He that endureth in the doctrine of Chriſte, hath both the father & the ſonne.

Here doth he now adde greater thynges. For it is a very great thynge to wãte God, and to haue nother the father nor yͤ ſonne. But he yͭ abydeth not in the truth & loue, he hath nother the father nor the ſonne. Wherfore we ought to endeuoure and buſyly to laboure that we procede in the waye of truth. Of this reade more in the.ii. Chapter of yͤ.i. epiſtle of S.Jhon. Chriſt ſayeth Joh.xv. Without me can ye do nothynge. For as the braunche cut from the tre can brynge no frute: ſo lykewyſe he yͭ is cut frõ yͤ vyneſtocke, which is Chriſt can not but abyde vnfruteful, & trãſgreſſe yͤ cõmaundemẽtes of god, wherfore alſo he hath not God, nor no parte with hym, but ſhalbe caſt in yͤ vtter darkneſſe, where ſhalbe waylynge and gnaſſhynge of teth.

Contrary wyſe he that abydeth in yͤ ſtock or tre, is partaker both of the ſappe and goodneſſe of it, and is euer workyng the wyll of the father, the frute of Chriſtes merytes, and the gyftes of the holy gooſt: ſo that al thynges do ſerue hym for the beſt Roma.viii.

Yf ther come ony mã vnto you, &

brynge not this learnyng, hym receaue not in to the houſe, nother byd hym God ſpede: For he that byddeth hym God ſpede is partaker of his eueldedes

Wyth playne wordes commaũdeth he to auoyde and flye the company of heretykes, and to cleue conſtaũtly to Chriſtes doctrine. They that brynge theyr doctrine and not Chriſtes, or they that preach or followe doctrines contrary to Chriſtes doctrine they be Antichriſtes. Now the doctrine of Chriſt is comprehẽded in the wrytynges of the Prophetes and Apoſtles. Wherfore, what ſoeuer he be that bryngeth not yͤ ſcriptures, or teacheth ought agaynſt yͤ ſcripture, is in no wyſe to be admytted vnto thy company, or ony of thyne, nother vſe ony communicacion wyth ſuch. For euell communicaciõs infecte good maners. And yͤ dwellynge neare of ſuche, doth peruerte euen the beſt alſo. By the houſe he meaneth al maner dwellynge by of ſuch: and by byddynge God ſpede, he meaneth famylyar communicacion.

Who be heretikes.

Eraſmus enlargynge the wordes of ſaynt Jhon ſayeth featly on thys wyſe: Yf ony come to you that bryngeth a doctrine contrarye to thys, that thereby he myght leade you from the truth of ȳ goſpell, vnto hym ought ye geue ſo lytle hearynge, that ye receaue hym not into youre houſe, yf he do requyre lodgynge & nother ſalutynge wyſhe hym health, yf perchaunce he do mete you in the waye. For it is to be douted leſt he infecte the houſholde wyth hys ſeiournynge by the, and render the euel for the benefyte that thou ſheweſt hym in permyttynge hym ȳ vſe of thy houſe, which greetynge, cōmunicacion, & reaſonynge be cauſe therof. For euel cōmunicacions corrupte good maners as one of the olde ſages ſayeth. Moreouer he that vſeth familiaritie wyth ſuch deceauers or ſaluteth them, is taken as partener wyth them. For he geueth the wycked a corage, and an occaſion to thynke that he is of ſome eſtimacion amonge thē, whom he goeth aboute to ſubuerte: & vnto other he geueth a ſemblaūce of euell, as thoughe he dyd fauoure hys wyckedneſſe, whoſe company he doth not refrayne. The ſayeng of Jeſus Sirach in his boke Eccleſiaſti. the.xiii.Cha. is lyke to this, where he ſayeth: he ȳ toucheth the pytch, ſhalbe ſtayned of it, & he ȳ vſeth the proud mās cōpany, ſhal waxe proude.

I had many thynges to wryte vnto

you, neuertheleſſe I wolde not wryte wyth papyr and ynke, but I truſte to come vnto you, and ſpeake wyth you mouth to mouth, that oure ioye maye be full. The ſonnes of thy electe ſyſter grete the. Amen.

In cōcludynge his epiſtle he promiſeth to come vnto thē, & preſently to declare theſe & other thynges more largely: & that for this purpoſe, not ſo to take them with gyles & craftyneſſe, to vſe dominion ouer them, & poll them of theyr mony: but that theyr Chriſtē ioye may be complet. And it is complete whan we all perceaue the buſyneſſe of ẏ fayth aryght, and exercyſe it by charite. In the ende alſo he ſetteth the ſalutacion of that churche, fro whēce he wryteth, makynge all congregacyons ſyſterhoddes of one ſpouſe ẏ LORDE Jeſu Chriſt, and the membres, that is, the Chriſtians endued with grace, he calleth chyldrē. That alſo that he rather wyl endue theyr mynde ſpiritually with wordes and by mouth, then by wrytynge and with penne, is alſo graciouſly ſayd. For it is no profyte vnto vs to ſe, heare, or reade the doctrine of the Apoſtles wrytten on papir with ynke, without we wryte it alſo in our mynde, redreſſynge our lyfe and

Whan ioye is complet.

M. iiii.

maners after it.

¶ This epiſtle in all thynge ſauoureth and is conformable vnto the ſprete of S. Jhon the Apoſtle, though ſome wyll ſaye it to be of one Jhon a preſt, elder, or ſeniour. Neuertheleſſe how ſo euer mēs iudgemētes do vary, ſurely ther is nought wrytten in this, that is not to be red in the fyrſte epiſtle: wherfore it is of lyke ſprete, ſo ẏ noman can refuſe it without he do wyckedly. For this then, and for openynge his truth ſo clearly, be prayſe and glory vnto God.

AMEN.

¶ The ende of the .ii. epiſtle of S. Jhon.

Here begynneth the .iii. Epiſtle of S. Jhon.

THe Elder vnto the beloued Gaius, whom I loue in the truth. Welbeloued I wyſhe in all thynges that thou proſpereſt and fareſt Well, euen as thy ſoule proſpereth.

Thys begynnynge and ſalutacion is playne, neuertheleſſe ſom what varyenge from the commune vſe of the Apoſtles. It maye be applyed to Gaius houſholde and maye be vnderſtande thus: I wyſh & deſyre that as thy ſoule proſpereth, and is endued wyth all maner of ſpirituall gyftes: euen ſo all thy frendes and houſholde alſo, or ſo proſpere God all that belongeth vnto the. For it is the mooſte felycite that can be to haue a ſounde mynde in a ſounde body. Here is to be noted yͤ nature of true loue, which reioyceth at oure neyghboures health: yee can ſuffre hys enemye to proſper, howe the more his frende?

I reioyced greatly whan the brethrē came and teſtifyed of the truth that is in the, how thou walkeſt in truth. I haue no greater ioye than for to heare that my ſonnes walke in verite.

S. Jhon reioyceth that fyrſt he hath receaued the truth, and that he walketh therin wyth great prayſe of the brethren. To walke in the truth is to lyue a godly lyfe accordynge to the rule of truth, wythout gyle or ſimulacion. Nother is it ynough to knowe the truth, wythout we walke alſo therin: that is to refourme our wordes, dedes ⁊ all our lyuynge thereby. Moreouer the greateſt ioye that ſayntes haue, is, that they hear vs walke in truth wherfor they couet not to be worſhipped ſuperſticiouſly. For the labour they toke to enfourme vs was not to be rewarded agayne of vs with ceremonious ſeruice, ⁊ therin to delyte: but to delyte in declaring the fruite of theyr laboure, by our cōuerſacion accordynge to the wyll of God as they taught. Euen as the plowman beſtowynge great laboure vpō his feldes, hath no greater delyte ⁊ ioye, thē to ſe hys feldes geue plenty of corne: to ŷ which entent he beſtowed al his laboure.

To walke in the truth

Dearly beloued thou doeſt faythfully whatſoeuer thou doeſt to the brethren and to ſtraungers, whyche bare wytneſſe of thy loue before al the congregacion. Vvhich brethren whã thou bryngeſt forwardes on theyr iourney, (as it pleaſeth God) thou ſhalt do wel, becauſe that for hys names ſake they went forth, & toke nothynge of the gẽtyles, we therfore oughte to receaue ſuche, that we alſo myght be helpers of the truthe.

Fyrſt it is requyred that we receaue yͤ truth, and remayne ſounde in the fayth, ⁊ ſecondarely that we be thankefull: Wherfore the Apoſtle reioyceth wͭ Gaius of the hoſpitalite and benefyte, whych they vnto whom he had ſhewed it teſtifyed opẽly before all the congregacion. Thys place teacheth thãkfulneſſe, ⁊ yͭ no mã is to be depriued of hys due reward. And becauſe we be boũden to do well to euery mã, ⁊ chefely to the myniſters of gods word: therfore doth Jhon prayſe yͤ in Gaius, ⁊ in hym al other faythfull, vſynge therto argumẽtes of courteſy ⁊ profitablenes. For it is courteſy (ſayeth he) yf yͧ bryng thẽ farwardes on theyr iourney (as it pleaſeth god) yͭ is: yf yͧ ſtuffe thẽ wͭ foode by yͤ waye, ⁊ intreate thẽ well whyle they are by yͤ. For thou knoweſt to whom thou geueſt it, namely God, which ſayd: He that receaueth you, receaueth me. And to thys belongeth alſo the reaſon followynge: For they wente forth for the name of Chriſte. That is: they go aboute to preache the goſpel, and not to be enryched and to do theyr owne buſyneſſe. And therfore do they take nothynge of the Gentyles, vnto whome they preach, that ſo they myght wynne the more vnto Chriſte, becauſe they be farre from ſuſpicion of ſekynge auauntage amonge the Gentyles. It is therfore oure dutye, (whych do know that the labourer is worthy of hys wages) to receaue ſuch good men and ſuccurre the wyth oure ſubſtaunce. To the ende dothe he alſo ioyne the rewarde ſayenge: that we alſo myght be helpers of yͤ truth, namely that ſeynge we maye not preach, and we be bounde to forther the truth, we maye do it wyth oure ſubſtaunce, helpynge & aydyng them ſo, to whom the office is commytted and are apte therto. Mat. x. ſayeth Chriſt: He that receaueth a prophete in the name of a prophete, ſhall receaue the rewarde of a prophete, and he that geueth one of theſe lytle ones a cuppe of colde water in the name of a diſciple, verely I ſaye vnto you he ſhall not loſe hys rewarde. By thys place it appeareth that ther were many good mē at that tyme, whych followynge the enſāple of Paule preached the Goſpell frely vnto the Gentyles. For the men of the primityfe church dyd ſo earneſtly couet the glorye of the LORDE Chriſt to be promoted and ſet forth, that for hys ſake they dyd ſuffre and take great payne for it. But they that were not ordyned to that office, gaue therto al theyr ſubſtaunce, that the labourers in the Goſpell ſhulde want nothyng. And amonge ſuche was Gaius the chefeſt a ryche man as it ſemeth, whome Paule alſo Roma.xvi. calleth hys ooſte and the ooſte of all the congregacion. Beſyde theſe alſo dyd many good men of the meane ſort helpe to promote the Goſpell lykewyſe. And we (vnto whom the endes of yͤ world be come) lye ſnortynge lyke ſloggardes. They that are apte to teache, & to whome God hath geuen grace in preachynge and facunde or welſpeakynge, wyll not put thēſelues, nor theyr ſubſtaunce in haſarde: ether wyll not take the laboure vpon thē, wythout they be wel anoynted wyth ſome fatte benefyce or ſtipende, and becauſe few or none obtayne them, that be mete for it, therfore is that office ſo ſlackely executed. And agayne the Patrons wyll admytte none that be poore ⁊ haue nought, though they be mete for it. Yee ſo farre we be from myniſtrynge our ſubſtaunce to ſuch, that we enuye and wythdrawe from them ſuch ſtipende, as of longe tyme haue ben geuen of other to ſuche vſe: and thus we ſe that ỹ doctrine of godlyneſſe, ⁊ the glory of Chriſtes name do peryſh. But I praye God geue vs that ſprete that we ſe to haue occupyed theyr hartes of whome Jhon ſpeaketh here, and prayſeth them.

I wrote vnto the congregacion, but Diotrephes whych loueth to haue the preeminence amonge them, receaued vs not. Vvherfore yf I come, I wyll declare hys dedes whych he doth yeaſtynge on vs wyth malicious wordes, nother is there wyth content. Not only he hymſelfe receaueth not the brethrē but alſo he forbyddeth thē that wolde and thruſteth them out of the congregacion.

It is not playne of what wrytynge Jhon doth ſpeake, neuertheleſſe, it ſemeth ỹ he wrote vnto that congregacion wherin Gaius was, in the whych wrytynge he exhorted them to do it that they ſawe Gaius do. But one Diotrephes, wythſtode theſe holy admonicions, whome he here rebuketh, blamynge hys hereſy, reuylynges, wantõneſſe of tunge, & hys ſtudye in pryde & ambicion: & beſydes thys he blameth hys vncurteouſneſſe, deſpyſynge cruelneſſe & tyranny againſt the brethren. He is euẽ an enſample of al heretykes and wycked men whych alſo reſyſt the goſpell. Neuertheleſſe at thys tyme he wryteth not vtterly agaynſt hym, but kepeth it vntyll he come & be preſent wyth hym: for thã doth he threaten he wyll pull awaye hys vyſure. And yͭ is the dutye of true hyrdemen, to forgeue nought, nor to ſpare wycked deceauers. What thynke ye wolde Jhon ſaye now adayes yf he came agayne in thoſe churches that wyll ſeme euangelical, & fynde not only one Diotrephes, couetynge yͤ primacye but innumerable Cardinals, Patriarkes Byſhops & other prelates of the churche? I paſſe ouer that ſome of them chatter I wote not what agaynſte the doctrine of truth, yͭ they receaue not the pure doctrine of Chriſt & hys Apoſtles, & that they condẽne & excõmunicate ſuch as wolde receaue it. God draw vs out of yͤ lyõs mouth.

Dearly beloued follow not that whych is euel, but that whych is good He that doth well, is of God, but he that doth euell, ſeyth not God.

He addeth to preſerue Gaius frō offendyng, as though he wolde ſaye: Thou knoweſt what Diotrephes goeth about, wherfore I wolde not haue yͤ to follow yͤ maner of men, & therfore ſetteth he a generall rule and ſentence, namely: that it is to be followed that is good, and not that which is euell. The which ſentēce maye be alleged agaynſt them that brynge forth to ſtablyſh theyr opinions, longe tymes, the maners & coſtumes of yͤ fathers, wyllynge rather to be ruled therby, thā by Gods holy worde, whiche neuertheleſſe ſhall teſtify agaynſte vs at yͤ great daye, or wt vs, & not yͤ fathers coſtumes, & maners. He ioyneth alſo another ſentēce to thys, ſayenge: He that doth well, is of God: but he that doth euell, perceaueth not Gods buſyneſſe, nother ſhall he ſe hym after thys lyfe. Wherfore that which is is good, and God hath cōmaunded, that is to be done, and not other mēs maners, enſamples, and coſtumes, which ſomtyme were inſtitute for ſome cauſe, thā nedyge a reformacion.

Demetrius hath a good reporte of all men, and of the truthe: yee and we oureſelues alſo beare recorde, and ye knowe that oure recorde is true.

To a wycked enſample he ioyneth, ſet,

and

teth and cõferreth the enſample of Demetrius a good mã, that ther be nought lefte behynde to confirme Gaius mynde. For the myndes of good men be greatly moued wyth the enſamples of euell men, wherfor we ſe ſcripture oftentymes heale thys grefe. It muſt vndoutedly haue ben a man of maruaylous integrite and vnblameable thys Demetrius, vnto whome all the congregacion of good mẽ, yee and the truth alſo, beſyde that the Apoſtle Ihõ a man wythout gyle, and that had not learned to flattre gaue ſuch verdyte. Wherfore we paſſynge by Diotrephes, let vs rather followe Gaius & Demetrius For ſuch be ſet for our enſample to follow, and the other to eſchue.

I haue many thynges to wryte, but I wyll not wyth penne and ynke wryte vnto the. For I truſte I ſhall ſhortely ſe the, and we ſhal ſpeake mouth to mouth. Peace be wyth the. The louers ſalute the. Grete the louers by name.

As he concluded the ſeconde epiſtle, ſo concludeth he thys laſt alſo. And here in are many fayre enſamples of loue and charite, which be rather to be followed thã to be diſputed vpon. S. Jerome ſemeth to attribute theſe two epiſtles, the.ii.and.iii. vnto one Jhon a diuine or preſte. But I can not ſe what be conteyned herein that is vnworthy of S. Jhō. For the ſhortneſſe hath alſo a wonderous fauoure. And the brefneſſe hath alſo myſteries: wherfore it is not to be refuſed.

¶ The ende of the iii. Epiſtle.

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